

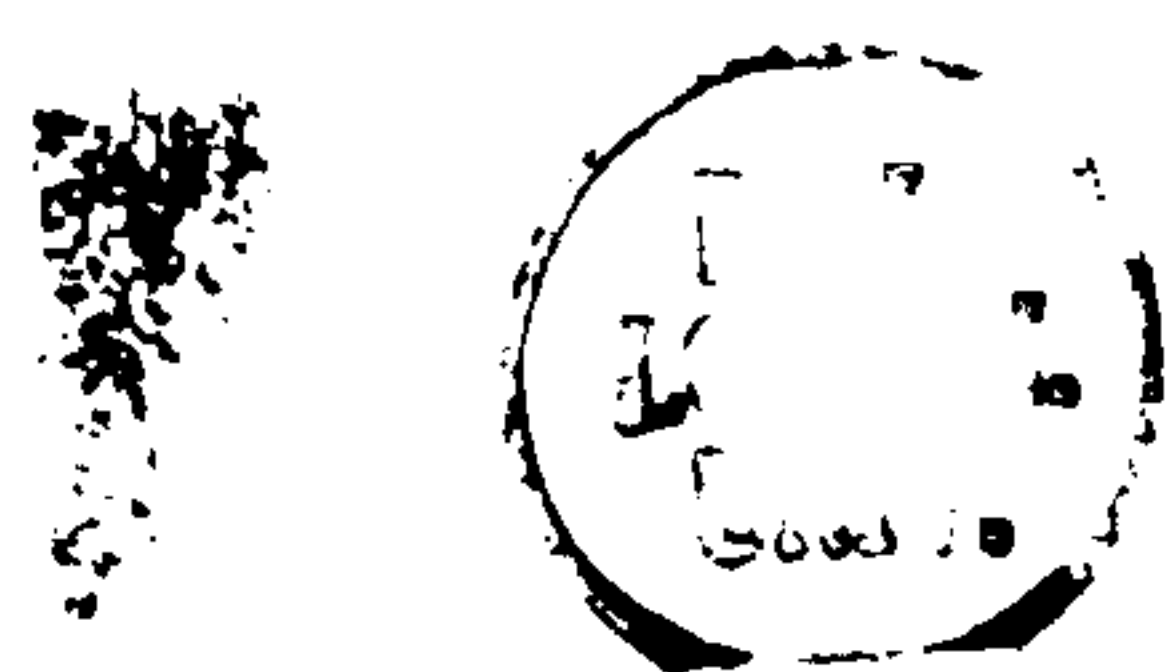
LAUDIANS, PURITANS AND THE LAITY IN ESSEX c.1630-1642

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SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2001



ABSTRACT

The sources for investigating Laudianism and Puritanism in Essex during the 1630s and early 1640s are especially rich, illuminating the beliefs, attitudes and actions not only of clergymen but also of lay people from all social groups. The thesis begins with a general chapter in which the extent and type of evidence for Laudianism and Puritanism amongst the clergy is discussed. The reliability and accuracy of the sources is assessed and it is demonstrated that about equal numbers of beneficed Puritan and Laudian clergy are known to have been working in Essex at the outbreak of the English Civil War.

Chapters two, three and four provided three individual case studies of clergy in order to provide a fuller understanding of Laudianism and Puritanism as they manifested themselves in the parishes of Essex. Chapter two examines the Laudianism and career of Richard Drake. As comparisons of his beliefs with those of other Laudians demonstrate, Drake was extremely representative of the Laudian movement. It is shown that Drake was typical too in confining himself largely to the company of other Laudians, and refusing in any way to accept the religious changes of the Civil War and Interregnum. The life and works of the Puritan clergyman Henry Greenwood, who started his career as a nonconformist but shortly before his death embraced the Prayer Book ceremonies, are central to chapter three. The close analysis of Greenwood's early published sermons vividly illustrate Puritan piety, painful preaching and the uncompromising faith of those who looked only to the Bible for guidance and authority. The examination of the tract written by Greenwood after his 'conversion' to conformity, on the other hand, provides an insight into the mindset of those Puritans who believed in wholehearted loyalty to the Church of England. Chapter four focuses on the life and beliefs of Nehemiah Rogers, who during a career that stretched from 1618 to 1660 changed his opinions on a number of religious and theological issues. Rogers began his career as a Calvinist and a moderate Puritan. Rogers remained a Calvinist until 1640 but by 1631 he had abandoned Puritanism become instead an enthusiastic advocate of conformity. Furthermore, during the 1630s Rogers forged close links with the Laudians William, Lord Maynard and Robert Aylett. During the 1650s Rogers changed his views again, becoming doctrinally Arminian and expressing admiration for the Protectorate.

Chapters five and six furnish collective studies respectively of lay attitudes towards Laudian and Puritan ministers in Essex. From the evidence presented therein four main conclusions are drawn. Firstly, that Laudian ministers had supporters among the laity, and were certainly not as unpopular as John Morrill, for example, has suggested, but were opposed by Puritan nonconformists and Prayer Book Protestants. Secondly, that moderate Puritan clergymen also had supporters but that they faced levels of opposition similar to those encountered by Laudian ministers. Thirdly, that Puritan nonconformist ministers had a reasonable amount of identifiable lay support but that, even taking into account the fact that opposition to nonconformity is difficult to trace, were not as popular with the laity as historians such as T.W. Davids, Harold Smith and William Hunt have implied. Finally, it is concluded that substantial numbers of lay people from all social groups had definite, fixed opinions on religious issues and thus that even at a parish level religious controversy did not so much emerge during the Civil War as hold some responsibility for provoking it.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

BL	British Library
<i>C.S.P.D</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
ERO	Essex Record Office
Foster	Foster, J. (ed) <i>Alumni Oxonienses</i> Volumes 1-4, (Oxford,1891-2)
FRC	Family Record Centre
LMA	London Metropolitan Archive
Matthews	A. G. Matthews, <i>Walker Revised: Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy During the Grand Rebellion: 1642-1660</i> , (Oxford, 1948)
Newcourt	R. Newcourt, <i>Repertorium or An Ecclesiastical Parochial History of the Diocese of London: Volume Two, Essex</i> , (London, 1710)
PRO	Public Record Office
R.C.H.M	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments
<i>S.T.C.</i>	A. W. Pollard. G. R. Redgrave and K. F. Pantzer (eds), <i>Short Title Catalogue of Books ... 1475-1640</i> , (3 Volumes, London, 1976-1991)
Venn	J. Venn and J. A. Venn, (eds), <i>Alumni Cantabrigienses</i> , Part 1, Volumes 1-4, (Cambridge, 1922-7)
White	J. White, <i>The First Century of Scandalous Malignant Priests Made and Admitted into Benefices by the Prelates in Whose Hands the Ordination of Ministers and Government of the Church Hath Been</i> , (London, 1643)
*	Denotes my translation from Latin

When quoting from original sources, I have retained the spelling and punctuation but modernised the capitalisation. Dates are given in the Old Style but with the year taken as beginning on January 1st.

INTRODUCTION

‘The division of hearts must needs hinder the building of our Jerusalem: God’s sabbaths are neglected, the word, the gospel of Christ Jesus, cannot have the free passage that it would otherwise have, were it not for our home breed broils. Some will hear none but refusers of conformity: others take advantage of their disobedience to contemn the ministry: both waies the kingdom of Christ is hindered. It give likewise a matter of encouragement to our enemies.’¹ Nehemiah Rogers delivered this warning in 1621, but it passed largely unnoticed or unheeded and over the next two decades the divisions within the Church of England widened and deepened. By 1642 no gulf was wider or deeper than that between the Laudians and the Puritans and nowhere are the divisions between, and indeed the allegiances within, the two groups better documented than for the county of Essex.

But before more is said about the reasons for studying Essex, Laudianism and Puritanism must be defined. The most important aspect of Laudianism was the placing of communion tables north to south, or altarwise, behind rails, at the east end of the church. Also central to Laudianism was an emphasis on bodily reverence and adoration during worship. Laudianism was characterized too by the belief that churches should be beautified and adorned, a stress on set prayer and sacramental grace and the placing of the Eucharist at the centre of worship.² Puritans, on the other hand, emphasised preaching and Bible-centred piety above all, arguing that churches should be plain and undecorated, reverence and adoration of God being through the mind and soul not the body. They held that ceremonies were at least unnecessary and at worst offensive to God, and encouraged *ex tempore* prayer.³

¹ N. Rogers, *Christian Curtesie or St. Pauls Ultimate Vale*, (London, 1621), p. 56

² This definition has been formulated with particular reference to: P. Lake, ‘The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630’s’, in K. Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church 1603-1642*, (London, 1993), pp. 161-185 and K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the Episcopate of James I*, (Oxford, 1990), pp. 231-240

³ This definition has been formulated with particular reference to: P. Collinson, *English Puritanism*, (London, 1983), *passim*, and P. Lake, ‘Defining Puritanism-Again?’ in F. Bremer (ed), *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth Century Anglo-American Faith*, (Boston, 1993), 3-29

Both Laudianism and Puritanism were widespread in Essex but that is not the only reason why this study focuses on that particular county. More important is the quality and quantity of source material, both printed and manuscript, that survives for Essex. The extant documents are unusually detailed and allow the extent and nature of Laudianism and Puritanism among the clergy to be discussed and their popularity amongst lay people of all social groups to be explored. The first chapter, which is broad in scope, takes as its subject matter the evidence from which Puritan and Laudian clergymen in Essex can be identified. The sources themselves are discussed and evaluated. The beliefs of each minister are treated individually and lists of known Puritan and Laudian ministers who were beneficed in Essex in the 1630s and 1640s are provided.

The subsequent three chapters are microhistorical case studies of individual clergymen. Chapters two and three provide a more detailed understanding of the Laudian and Puritan practices and teachings lay people in Essex would have encountered at their local churches. The career and the beliefs of the Laudian Richard Drake, as revealed in his autobiography and other unpublished writings, are the focus of chapter two. Drake's beliefs and experiences are compared with those of other Essex Laudians and the extent to which he was representative of the wider Laudian movement is discussed. Chapter three is a study of Henry Greenwood. He was a clergyman who began his career as a Puritan nonconformist but underwent a change of heart in his eighties which caused him to accept, and defend in print, the Prayer Book ceremonies. The sermons of Greenwood's early years allow the nature of painful preaching, relying as it did on a wholly Bible-centred piety, to be explored. In his final work, Greenwood did not reject all his earlier values but he did explain his transformation from nonconformist to defender of the Prayer Book ceremonies. This book, therefore, permits an examination of why some Puritans were completely obedient to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England. Chapter four, which centres on the life and religious beliefs of Nehemiah Rogers, provides a different perspective. Rogers fits neatly into neither the Puritan nor the Laudian category.

although he seems to have had, at different times, a close connection and affinity with both. In the 1620s Rogers was a Calvinist with links to the Puritan movement. He remained a Calvinist until at least 1640, but by 1631 he had abandoned Puritanism and embraced conformity. Furthermore, during the next decade he was to benefit from the patronage of the Laudians William, Lord Maynard and Robert Aylett and in 1642 he was sequestered from his living. Little is known about Rogers' views between 1642 to 1658 but by the latter date he was an Arminian and a supporter of the Protectorate. In short, his career is interesting and varied.

Lay attitudes to Laudianism and Puritanism in parishes across Essex form the subject matter for chapters five and six respectively. Using primarily the archdeaconry court records and wills, evidence of support for and opposition towards Laudianism has been collected together and discussed in as great a depth as possible in chapter five. Chapter six is a companion study of Puritanism and the laity and is compiled from the same sources. Unfortunately, there is an in-built bias in the archdeaconry court records. They are not an impartial record of the day to day events in each parish, rather they are a list of acts of disobedience against ecclesiastical law. Therefore they highlight negative rather than positive opinions. They list acts of opposition to, rather than support for, authority. That having been said, it should be pointed out that often people opposed a ceremony or doctrine not just in order to be obstructive but because they wished to see a different practice or theology put in place of the existing one. Or, to put it another way, behind a negative opinion about an aspect of belief or worship there often lay a positive opinion about a contrasting idea or ritual. The fact remains, however, that those who supported Laudianism and those who opposed Puritan nonconformity do not appear frequently in the archdeaconry court records. The former discrepancy is to an extent corrected by the surviving wills, which sometimes document support for Laudianism or Laudian ministers. No single set of sources can be used to discover evidence of opposition to Puritan nonconformity but the instances of it that have been found have been recorded. It is important that evidence of support for Laudianism and opposition to Puritanism is

recorded, although it may be relatively small in volume. Chapters five and six are not concerned only with opposition to Laudianism and support for Puritanism but are a more general examination of the spirit in which Puritanism and Laudianism were received by the laity.

As has already been stated, it has been possible to provide a detailed analysis of the topics outlined above because of the breadth and depth of the surviving archival material but it is not only Laudianism and Puritanism in Essex that are well documented; the county is generally well served by its records. For that reason, a number of historians have concentrated their attention on this county. Their work provides an excellent basis upon which to build. Especially useful are those books that deal specifically with religious issues, for example, T. W. David's *Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity*, Harold Smith's *Ecclesiastical History of Essex* and William Hunt's *The Puritan Moment*.⁴ John Walter's *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers*, although only partly about religious issues is also extremely valuable, as is Keith Wrightson and David Levine's study of the parish of Terling and James Sharpe's article on Kelvedon.⁵ Finally, there are books and articles on religious history which although they span England as a whole nevertheless reveal a considerable amount about Essex, Tom Webster's *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* and Peter Lake's 'The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630's', for instance.⁶ This thesis aims both to complement and add new dimensions to the existing work on religion in early modern Essex by focusing on areas which have been little researched: the reliability, nature and extent of the evidence for Puritan and

⁴T. W. Davids, *Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in the County of Essex*, (London, 1863); H. Smith, *The Ecclesiastical History of Essex Under the Long Parliament and the Commonwealth*, (Colchester, 1923); W. Hunt, *The Puritan Moment: The Coming of Revolution in an English County*, (London, 1983)

⁵ J. Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers*, (Cambridge, 1999); K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling 1525-1700*; J. Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency in an Essex Parish 1600-1640', in J. Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England 1500-1800*, (London, 1977)

⁶ T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement c. 1620-1643*, (Cambridge, 1997); Lake 'The Laudian Style' in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, pp. 161-185

Laudian beliefs amongst the beneficed clergy; the way in which Puritan and Laudian beliefs were practised and taught in the parishes of Essex and the reaction that Laudianism and Puritanism provoked from the laity. Through an investigation of these issues this work will also answer more general questions, such as were the differences between Laudianism and Puritanism of general concern in local parishes? And, did ordinary men and women, those who had little or no influence beyond, or even within, their parish boundaries and certainly none at national level, make their own judgements on religious and spiritual issues or did they simply accept unquestioningly the teaching of whoever happened to be their parish priest?

Although Laudianism has attracted the attention of historians such as Peter Lake and John Walter, it is still secondary, in the attention it has generated, to the debate about Arminianism.⁷ Why then study the reception accorded by the laity to Laudianism rather than Arminianism? Surely Arminianism is a more valid subject for study? Certainly it would be fascinating to be able to focus on the response Arminianism received from the parishioners of Essex but, unfortunately, this is impossible. Surviving evidence points to only five clergymen in Essex who were demonstrably Arminians, in the sense that they believed that salvation and reprobation were based only on God's conditional will and thus that, potentially at least, all could be saved.⁸ Of the relationships these five clergymen had with their parishioners very little can be discovered from the surviving records. In any case, it is

⁷ Lake, 'The Laudian Style' in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, pp. 161-185; Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence*, pp. 175-182

⁸ The clergymen in question were John Browning, Edward Cherry, John Gore, Samuel Hoard and Christopher Newsted. Browning was described in the depositions against him as 'a noted Arminian and altar adorer'. W. H. Coates, V. F. Snow and A. Steele Young, (eds), *Private Journals of the Long Parliament*, (London, 1982-1997). Edward Cherry preached that 'baptisme washeth away originall sinne, and that all may be saved if they will and have free will thereunto.' p.1, White, p. 3. In *The Oracle of God*, Gore wrote that 'God is gracious and he denies his grace to none but offers it.' J. Gore, *The Oracle of God*, (London, 1636), p. 19. Hoard argued that 'absolute and inevitable reprobation hath little or no footing in antiquity ... It dishonoureth God for it changes him deeply with two things: mans eternal torments in Hell [and] their sins on earth. Later in the same book Hoard wrote: 'It says that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son not God so loved the elect.' S. Hoard, *God's Love to Mankind Manifested by Disproving his Absolute Decree for their Damnation*, (London, 1633), pp. 46-47. According to his parishioners Newsted preached that 'Christ died for all [and] prov[ed] it by the catechisme in the Common Prayer Book.' BL Add MS 5829, f. 19

not generally possible to judge if men and women in these parishes supported or opposed Arminianism for whether a person believed in free will or unconditional predestination can rarely be reasoned from a last will and testament and the church courts were never home to debates on the causes of election and damnation.

Lay attitudes to Arminianism cannot therefore be traced but it is possible to research the reaction which Laudianism provoked from the laity. And it is relevant to do so for Laudianism and Arminianism were closely, although not inextricably, intertwined. Indeed, Nicholas Tyacke refers to the Laudian innovations as the ‘ceremonial aspects’ of Arminianism, arguing that there was a connection but not an unbreakable bond between the ceremony and the theology.⁹ The connection is certain, a large proportion of Arminians were also Laudians. Richard Montagu, William Laud and Matthew Wren, for instance, all left written evidence of their Arminianism and demonstrated that they were Laudians by their support for the policy of placing the communion table east end, altarwise and behind rails.¹⁰ Furthermore, belief in the importance of set prayer, an emphasis on sacramental grace and the desire to place the Eucharist, rather than preaching at the centre of worship can all be found among both Laudians and doctrinal Arminians. As Tyacke has written: ‘It was no accident that during the Arminian ascendancy altars and fonts came to dominate church interiors, for the two were logically connected, sacramental grace replacing the grace of predestination.’¹¹ For all the reasons just given, Arminianism and the ceremonial innovations of the 1630s were closely associated in the minds of contemporaries and opposition to one often implied opposition to the other, while support for one often entailed support for the other. So, even though it was possible to be a Laudian without being an Arminian or *vice versa*, the two were likely to share much common ground.

⁹ N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640*, (Oxford, 1987), p. 216

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 48, 70-71, 178-9, 200-3, 205-6, 207-8

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 176

But if this is true why is it so much easier to trace attitudes to Laudianism than to Arminianism? It is because whilst Arminianism is a theology, Laudianism refers to a set of ceremonial innovations; thus reaction to the latter, unlike that to the former, could be expressed through an individual's actions. For example, a person who strongly disliked the Laudian innovation of the altar rails could express his feelings by refusing to contribute to the cost of them or by not consenting to receive communion at them. On the other hand, those who had no objection to the rails could demonstrate this by making a payment towards them and by taking the sacrament from in front of them. Of course, it is not the case that everytime a person in Essex did or did not, for instance, take the communion it was recorded. But many of those who refused to receive the sacrament at the rails were presented to the archdeaconry courts and had their names, offence and sometimes an explanation for their behaviour entered into the act books. From these records and those of other offences, the historian is able to gain some idea of how widespread active opposition to Laudianism was. And from this information an indication of the numbers who at least tolerated and at best supported Laudianism can be established for it is reasonable to assume that those who did not actively oppose the innovations did not particularly disapprove of them and may even have favoured them. More positive evidence of support for Laudianism can sometimes be found in wills from the mid to late 1630s. If, for example, someone stipulated that a sum of money be spent on a typically Laudian beautification of a church, it is reasonable to suppose that he or she was a Laudian. Reactions to Puritanism can be traced in a similar way. Thus if a man or woman refused to kneel to receive the sacrament it is clear that that person was a Puritan, whilst if an individual informed the ecclesiastical authorities that their minister gave communion to seated communicants it is obvious that he or she was an opponent of nonconformity.

The fact that attitudes to Laudianism and Puritanism can be traced using local records is, of course, crucial but it is worth stressing too that the presence, or lack of, ceremony, reverence, adoration and beautification in church probably had a greater

impact of the lives of ordinary parishioners than theologies such as Arminianism and Calvinism. For, only parishioners with a decent level of education could have understood the implications and significance of their minister's opinions on predestination, salvation and reprobation. Indeed, many parishioners may not even have known whether their minister was a Calvinist or an Arminian. By contrast, nearly all parishioners would have noticed the extent to which the Prayer Book ceremonies and the Laudian innovations were used or neglected in their parish church and if preaching or holy communion was at the heart of worship and thus, potentially at least, nearly all could have formed and expressed opinions on Puritanism and Laudianism.

Ordinary people in the early seventeenth century may have been more exercised by Laudianism and Puritanism than Arminianism and Calvinism but for historians the reverse has become true in recent years. This is not to say that Laudianism and Puritanism have been neglected by historians, it is simply that of late the most heated historiographical discussion has centred around Arminianism and Calvinism. This thesis is not, of course, a study of Arminianism and Calvinism but, as has already been made clear, Arminians and Laudians shared a lot of common ground so historiographical perspectives on Arminianism are extremely relevant to this work. What may for convenience be called the Arminian-Calvinist debate is further pertinent to this work because it is partly about the political significance of religion in the years immediately preceding the English Civil War and the extent to which religious tension contributed to the outbreak of that conflict, two issues which will also be addressed here.

At the centre of this Arminian-Calvinist debate is the work of Nicholas Tyacke. In *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640* (1987) and several articles. Tyacke argues that the religious policy pursued by the Caroline Regime was a major contributory cause of the English Civil War.¹² Through his

¹² Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 245

examination of. in particular, doctoral theses from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, licensed publications and Paul's Cross sermons, Tyacke has come to the conclusion that the Church of England was a doctrinally Calvinist institution until the reign of Charles I. It was, that is, a church that held that some people were unconditionally elect and others inevitably damned. After the accession of Charles I, Tyacke explains, the balance of power in the church shifted decisively because a number of anti-Calvinist churchmen were given the freedom by Charles I to express Arminian ideas. Thus their belief that neither salvation nor reprobation were absolutely predetermined, which had emerged in England as early as the 1590s and had made gradual headway over the following thirty years, became the prevalent theology within the Church of England. As a natural consequence of this, Tyacke reminds his readers, the previously dominant Calvinism of Elizabethan and Jacobean England was marginalised. This, in turn, he argues, provoked the Puritans, who had never entirely disappeared from the religious and political scene but most of whom had become, in a sense, reconciled to the pre-Caroline *status quo*, into fierce opposition to the established church. The opposition of the Puritans was magnified by their extreme dislike of the ceremonial innovations that accompanied the rise of Arminianism. With the anti-Calvinists and the Puritans ranged against each other and both equally unprepared to compromise, that religion was to play a role in the Civil War was, Tyacke concludes, all but inevitable.¹³

Tyacke's thesis has provoked some fierce criticism. Christopher Haigh and George Bernard have both written pieces in which they question the central tenets of Tyacke's argument, while a counter argument has been formulated principally by

¹³ N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution' in C. Russell (ed), *The Origins of the English Civil War*, (London, 1973), pp. 119-143; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 1, 8, 245, 247 and *passim*; N. Tyacke, 'Debate: The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *Past and Present*, 115, (1987), pp. 201-216; N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism 1603-1640*, (London, 1990); N. Tyacke, 'The 'Rise of Puritanism' and the Legalizing of Dissent 1571-1719' in O. P. Grell, N. Tyacke and J. Israel, (eds), *From Persecution to Toleration*, (London, 1991), pp. 17-49; N. Tyacke, 'Archbishop Laud', in K. Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church 1603-1642*, (London, 1993), pp. 51-70; N. Tyacke, 'Anglican Attitudes: Some Recent Writings on the English Religious History, from the Reformation to the English Civil War', *Journal of British Studies*, 35, (1996), pp. 139-167

Kevin Sharpe and Peter White.¹⁴ These two historians, following the standard ‘Anglican’ view of history which derives in part from the seventeenth century itself, believe that Tyacke’s thesis is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the post 1559 Church of England. Calvinism was never, they contend, the *de facto* religion in England. Instead, they view the church as a *via media* between Geneva and Rome and even argue that it was the intention of Archbishop William Laud and Charles I, two of the men Tyacke places at the heart of the anti-Calvinist movement, to maintain the balance between the extremes of the Genevan and Roman churches. Indeed, White goes so far as to claim that Charles and Laud were generally successful in this endeavour. It is his belief that the single failure of the *via media* policy to maintain peace in the Church of England occurred in the late 1620s and even this he does not see as a result of the actions of either Charles or Laud. According to White, the failure was a consequence simply of the war with Spain which aroused in England extreme fear of popery and thus hostility towards those he views as Anglicans.¹⁵ Sharpe too blames events in Europe rather than ‘ecclesiastical disputes’ in England for transforming ‘disagreements and tensions’ into ‘confrontations’.¹⁶ At least, though, Sharpe is prepared to admit the existence of ‘bitter contests’ in the Caroline church; White refuses to concede that there was anything other than ‘peace’ in the church after the scare of Roman Catholicism had died down.¹⁷ Neither White nor Sharpe, however, sees doctrinal issues as a major cause of the English Civil War. And White does not even offer another explanation for the outbreak of war in 1642, he merely claims that the rise of Arminianism and its attendant problems is a ‘myth’ invented by Puritans in order to justify their own failure to enforce predestinarian

¹⁴ C. Haigh, *English Historical Review*, 103, (1988), pp. 425-7; G. Bernard, ‘The Church of England 1529-1642’, *History*, 73, (1990), pp. 181-206; K. Sharpe, ‘Archbishop Laud’, *History Today*, (1983), pp. 26-30; K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, (London, 1992); P. White, ‘The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered’, *Past and Present*, 101, (1983), pp. 34-54; P. White, ‘Debate: The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered’, *Past and Present*, 115, (1987), pp. 217-229; P. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, (Cambridge, 1992)

¹⁵ White, ‘The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered’, p. 54

¹⁶ Sharpe, *Personal Rule*, p. 377

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 360, White, ‘The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered’, p. 53

theology.¹⁸ Sharpe differs from this viewpoint in claiming that there was a connection between the Civil War and earlier religious disputes but that this connection involved, purely and simply, a continuing fear of popery. The rise of Arminianism is for Sharpe a fantasy. Nor does he accept that Puritanism was a factor.¹⁹

Julian Davies, like Sharpe and White, disagrees with Tyacke's interpretation of events but since he does not subscribe to all the central points of agreement between Sharpe and White, his views must be accorded their own paragraph. That having been said, all three historians are in agreement that the post-Reformation Church of England was not Calvinist but a 'community of multifarious doctrinal views' and all reject the notion of the rise of Arminianism in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.²⁰ Davies, Sharpe and White share as well the belief that Laud was doing no more than trying to maintain the Church of England as a *via media* between Reformed Protestantism and Catholicism. But Davies does not see Laud and Charles as pursuing the same policy towards the church. In fact, he believes that Charles I had his own distinct and controversial agenda. In Davies' words: 'Charles was consciously moulding his own image of religious observance and grafting upon the nation liturgical practices (kneeling, bowing, genuflecting and standing) often unaccommodating to pre-existing gestures. Such worship was an expression less of 'Arminian' sacramentalism than of Caesaro-sacramentalism, since Calvinists as well as those Dr. Tyacke designates 'Arminians' were prepared to practise and vindicate the novel modes of worship.'²¹ The aim of Charles's policy of attempting to silence the theological debate and promote ceremony and ritual was, for Davies, the achievement of 'uniformity and peace' within the Church of England.²² Neither were

¹⁸ White, 'The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 54. White does not say who these Puritans were.

¹⁹ Sharpe, *Personal Rule*, pp. 276-7, 933-8

²⁰ J. Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism*, (Oxford, 1992), p. 58

²¹ *ibid*, p. 18

²² *ibid*, pp. 12, 25

forthcoming, Davies writes. Uniformity failed to materialise because the ceremonial changes were unevenly enforced. Davies interprets the implementation of the policy thus: John Towers, bishop of Peterborough and Matthew Wren, first at Norwich and then at Ely, implemented the Caroline altar policy in full. In other words, they insisted that the communion table be moved to the east end, set altarwise and railed in and that communicants receive from there. The same regulations were encouraged rather than enforced by five other bishops. In a further seven dioceses the same order was given for the placing of the communion table but taking the sacrament from there was not made compulsory. That the table had to be positioned behind a rail at the east end but did not have to be altarwise was the instruction given by William Laud and nine other bishops. William Juxon issued a similar order but stressed additionally that communicants must receive at the rails, whilst John Williams of Lincoln did not mind whether the table was at the east end or in the body of the church as long as it was railed in.²³ Despite the fact that Davies views the Caroline altar policy as being enforced with varying degrees of strictness, he argues that hatred of it was all but universal by 1640. Davies concludes that combined with Charles' inept ecclesiastical governance, the altar policy destroyed the peace within the Church of England and was therefore a major cause of the Civil War.²⁴

Support for the ideas of Davies, White and Sharpe has come from Ian Green. It is in his book *The Christians ABC*, a study of catechisms published in England between 1570 and 1715, that Green endorses their conclusions. However, the very research upon which the book is based fails to vindicate any aspect of their argument. The problem is the set of sources used by Green. As he himself admits, catechisms were not used as 'polemical weapons' and did not generally include controversial material. Thus their picture of the period 1570 to 1645 as one of 'relative homogeneity of doctrine' cannot be trusted.²⁵ Catechisms were intended to impart the

²³ *ibid*, p. 218

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 288-307

²⁵ I.M. Green, *The Christian's ABC: Catechisms and Catechising in England 1570-1715*, (Oxford, 1996)

fundamentals of Christianity, not to provide an understanding of theology or ceremonial issues. Research involving only catechisms is not therefore a sufficient test of the validity of the various complicated historiographical theories which dominate the study of the origins of the English Civil War.

Sharpe, White and Davies all make two basic assumptions: that the post-Reformation church was a *via media* and that there was no rise of Arminianism. Neither of these ideas, however, can withstand close scrutiny. For example, the claim that the Church of England was never predominately Calvinist emerges as erroneous not merely through Tyacke's detailed work on the late Elizabethan and Jacobean church but too as a result of research undertaken by Peter Lake, Kenneth Fincham and Anthony Milton. In simple terms, Tyacke has quite clearly demonstrated the hegemony of Calvinism in three different areas of religious life. Firstly, he has proved that from about 1590 until 1620 books licensed personally by either the bishop of London or the archbishop of Canterbury and publications from the university printing presses were, if they touched on doctrine at all, unambiguously Calvinist. Secondly, Tyacke has shown that in the published Paul's Cross Sermons from the 1590s to the late 1620s Calvinism was the exclusive theology present. The third fact to emerge from Tyacke's research is that Oxford and Cambridge theses from the 1580s to the 1620s, concerned with predestination and allied doctrinal points always supported the Calvinist line.²⁶

These findings are bolstered by Fincham's demonstration of the supremacy of evangelical Calvinism amongst the Jacobean episcopate or, more specifically, the fact that at least eighteen and perhaps as many as twenty three of James' bishops believed strongly in preaching and seem to have been tolerant of moderate Puritanism.²⁷ Also lending weight to Tyacke's argument, is the research by Milton from which it transpires that members of the Church of England identified, both ecclesiologically

²⁶ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 29, 33, 60-62, 248-260; Tyacke, 'Debate: The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', pp. 202-3, 208

²⁷ K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p. 293

and doctrinally, with Calvinist churches abroad. More positively, it was with these churches that Englishmen formed links: Archbishop George Abbot, Joseph Hall, Thomas Morton and John Prideaux all had contacts with foreign Calvinists.²⁸

On a slightly different note, Lake argues that a consensus existed between members of the English episcopacy and Puritans. Through a comparison of the writings and sermons of two Calvinist bishops with those of a number of Puritans, Lake has demonstrated that, whatever their differences on other issues, the two members of the episcopate, John Whitgift and John Bridges, shared ‘a formal Calvinist consensus’ with the Puritans Thomas Cartwright, William Fulke, William Whittaker and Lawrence Chaderton.²⁹ To sum up, evidence from the period 1590-1620 establishes that the Church of England was then predominately Calvinist and that this state of affairs satisfied the moderate bishops and the Puritan divines alike.

Sources from the following twenty years paint a different picture: that of the rise of Arminianism and conflict. In 1624 Richard Montagu’s anti-Calvinist tract *A New Gagge for an Old Goose* was published and by the late 1620s Thomas Jackson had followed Montagu’s example and expressed Arminian views in print. But anti-Calvinist publications were primarily a feature of the 1630s.³⁰ Suellen Towers has noted in her 1999 PhD thesis: ‘Control of Religious Printing in Early Stuart England’ that of the licensed first editions for 1607, 63% ‘contained evangelical Calvinist teaching of unconditional predestination, portrayals of the Pope as Anti-Christ, and strict sabbatarianism’, by 1617 this proportion had risen to 71% but by 1637 all these three had disappeared completely from legally published works.³¹ The rise of Arminianism in the printing presses ran concurrently with the rise of

²⁸ A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1630-1640*, (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 395-407

²⁹ P. Lake, ‘Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635’, *Past and Present*, 114, (1987), p. 45

³⁰ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 47, 66-7, 184-5; Tyacke, ‘Debate: The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered’, pp. 212, 215

³¹ S. M. Towers, ‘Control of Religious Printing in Early Stuart England’, University of London PhD Thesis, 1999, [abstract](#)

Arminianism at court. Charles I's personal patronage tended to fall on anti-Calvinists and they were favoured as well for appointments to bishoprics or promotions within the episcopal system.³² Moreover, Arminianism came increasingly to be preached from the pulpit. For example, no Calvinist Paul's Cross sermons preached after 1628 survive in print but several in which Arminian doctrine was justified are extant.³³ The theological content of doctoral theses also underwent an alteration; Calvinism ceased to be maintained and occasionally Arminianism was defended.³⁴ As significantly, by the mid 1630s several colleges at both Oxford and Cambridge had seen Arminian masters replace Calvinist ones.³⁵

In the light of all the evidence outlined above there can be no doubt that the Church of England was a Calvinist stronghold from 1590 to 1620 but that Arminianism was rapidly taking hold by the outbreak of the English Civil War. William Laud as much as Charles I was responsible for the Arminian ascendancy which the Civil War halted, for the Archbishop openly criticized the Calvinist doctrine of reprobation and objected to the 'fatal opinions' contained in the Lambeth Articles, whilst the King silenced discussion on the predestination question and, by selective quotation, provided an Arminian interpretation of the Thirty Nine Articles.³⁶ As importantly, both men approved and furthered the policy by which communion tables were placed permanently altarwise, behind a rail at the east end of the church. At the same time, they encouraged the beautification of churches and argued for increased reverence during worship. Charles and Laud were not alone in advancing the cause of Arminianism and promoting the ceremonial changes, which are at the heart of what will be referred to here as Laudianism. Members of the episcopal

³² K. Fincham and P. Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policies of James I and Charles I', in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 37

³³ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 260-265

³⁴ *ibid*, pp. 52, 76

³⁵ *ibid*, pp. 29-86; J. Twigg, *The University of Cambridge and the English Revolution 1625-1658*, (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 25-37

³⁶ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 48-50; Tyacke 'Debate: The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 215; Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p. 59-60

bench, parochical clergymen and lay people adopted Arminian theology and supported the innovations in ceremony.³⁷

Of course, it cannot be claimed that Arminianism had an equal impact in all dioceses or that it was prevalent in local parishes. By the same token, it would be wrong to argue that the altar policy was enforced with equal stringency across the realm. That having been said, Davies is surely incorrect in his assertion that six different versions of the altar policy were evident in England. Certainly, the sources upon which he bases his argument are not completely reliable. For example, that communion tables were not placed altarwise cannot be proved with reference to churchwardens' accounts, for moving and repositioning tables cost nothing and would not therefore have been recorded. Nor are the act books necessarily good evidence for the position of the communion table because implicit in a note that the table was now at the east end might be that it was also altarwise. Equally, that some bishops considered it understood that they wished the laity to receive from the east end, altarwise, railed communion table is surely probable. Furthermore, that evidence for enforcement of this or other aspects of the altar policy does not always survive should not lead to the assumption that such enforcement did not occur. In most areas the survival of court records is patchy and it is at the very least difficult to deduce policy from the few that survive. Specific instances undermine Davies' case perhaps more than a lack of sources. For example, that Laud only required the communion table to be east end and railed in is clearly not true, for he admitted at his trial that he thought it should be 'north and south or altarwise'.³⁸ The altar policy was more uniformly implemented than Davies suggests and the strict implementation of the altar policy must in part explain why ceremonial innovations and the Arminianism with which they were often linked, were so controversial. That they caused a stir cannot be doubted. Discontent with the alterations and the newly dominant theology was

³⁷ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 199-203

³⁸ W. Laud, *The Works of the Most Reverend Father in God William Laud DD, Volume IV: A History of the Troubles and the Trial*, (Oxford, 1975), pp. 59-60

testified to in contemporary publications, had a considerable impact upon elections to the Short Parliament and can clearly be seen in the words and actions of some members of both Houses of Parliament.³⁹

The reaction of the educated and influential to Arminianism and to the Laudian innovations has been researched, if not exhaustively, at least extensively by historians. The impact and significance of Puritanism in the higher social strata has been investigated too. Therefore the focus in the following six chapters will be on the parish and on those ordinary parishioners whose religious experience was shaped exclusively or primarily in their parish. The prevalence of Puritanism and Laudianism amongst the parochial clergy in Essex will be explored. The way in which Laudianism and Puritanism were taught and justified in the parishes of Essex will be investigated, as will the attitudes of lay men and women to Laudianism and Puritanism. Finally, the extent to which the local situation compares and contrasts with the national one, and thus the position of this work within the historiographical debate, will be considered.

³⁹ J. K. Gruenfelder, 'The Election to the Short Parliament, 1640', in H. S. Reinmuth (ed), *Early Stuart Studies*, (Minneapolis, 1970), p. 219; E. S. Cope and W. H. Coates (eds), *Proceedings of the Short Parliament of 1640*, (Camden, 4th Series, 19, 1977)

CHAPTER ONE: PURITAN AND LAUDIAN CLERGYMEN IN ESSEX: THE QUESTION OF EVIDENCE

The following chapter is devoted to exploring the contents and assessing the reliability of a number of sources from which Puritan and Laudian clergymen can be identified. For the sake of clarity those sources that relate to Puritan clergymen will be dealt with separately from those sources that relate to Laudian clergymen.

Identifying Puritan clergymen in Essex

The basis of a list of beneficed Puritan clergymen can be compiled with relative ease for there survives an almost unquestionably reliable set of sources relating to the beliefs of some of them: the religious declarations to which they put their names.¹ Of these the two most useful for Essex are the *Essex Watchmen's Watchword* (1648) and *A Testimony of the Ministers in the Province of Essex to the Truth of Jesus Christ* (1648).² The former was signed by sixty three and the latter by 132 clergymen but of these most were either lecturers rather than beneficed ministers or men who had obtained their livings only after the sequestrations of the 1640s. Therefore of the large numbers who signed one or both documents only sixteen interest us here for they alone were beneficed in Essex prior to the outbreak of the English Civil War. Of these sixteen, six ministers signed both the *Watchword* and the *Testimony*: John

¹ The Puritan clergymen discussed here are all beneficed ministers. I have included no lecturers, not because I think they were without influence over the religious beliefs of lay people but because my primary reason for identifying Puritan ministers is so that I can progress to explore the lay reaction which they provoked. Since the records do not allow the clerical/lay relationships of which lecturers were a part to be reconstructed it does not seem appropriate to include them here. Moreover, only beneficed ministers really provide a fair comparison with the beneficed Laudian clergymen who comprise the other half of this study.

² *A Testimony of the Ministers in the Province of Essex to the Trueth of Jesus Christ and of our Solemn League and Covenant as also Against the Heresies and Blasphemies of these Times, and the Toleration of Them.* (London, 1648), pp. 1-8. *The Essex Watchmen's Watchword to the Inhabitants of the Said County Respectively, Dwelling Under Their Several Charges, by Way of Apologetical Account of the True Grounds of Their First Engagement with Them in the Cause of God, King and Parliament, for Their Vindication from Unjust Aspertions.* (London, 1648), pp. 1-14.

Argor, rector of Leigh on Sea, Edmund Brewer, vicar of Castle Hedingham. Josiah Church, curate of Pagglesham, Nehemiah Dodd, curate of Coggeshall, Daniel Duckfield, rector of Childerditch and Thomas Peck, vicar of Prittlewell. A further seven signed just the *Testimony*: John Beadle, rector at both Little Leighs and Barnston, Simon Lynch, vicar of North Weald, Samuel Newton, rector of Great Sampford and vicar of Hempsted, James Willet, rector of Little Chishall, John Willis, rector of Ingatestone, George Wilson, vicar of Ellsenham and Nathaniel Ward, rector of Stondon Massey. Three put their names only to the *Watchword*: Nathaniel Carr, rector of Langenhoe, Samuel Collins, vicar of Braintree and John Edes, rector of Lawford.

The significance of an individual putting his name to the *Watchword* or the *Testimony* cannot be fully understood unless more is said about the contents of these documents, so it is important to examine why each was written. Those who composed and put their names to the *Essex Watchmen's Watchword* seem to have two main aims in mind. Firstly, they wished to 'clear' the signatories from the 'unjust accusations of having been: the authors of all the kingdom's troubles, formentors of these unnatural divisions and bloody wars; yea, as men who have had a strong influence into the contriving and effecting of the death of our late sovereign ... as men who [through] their own meer interest of power and gain, would embroil the kingdom in a new war'.³ The second purpose of the *Watchword* was to attack in print some of the central tenets of the *Agreement of the People*, a Leveller document which along with certain radical political demands called for a broad degree of religious toleration.⁴ The signatories to the *Watchword* made clear their antipathy to both the political and the religious aspects of the Leveller programme. They rejected the Leveller demand for the establishment of a single legislative body elected by all adult males except wage earners, servants and paupers as 'tend[ing] too far to a tearing up

³ *Watchword*, p. 1

⁴ *Watchword*, p. 5-11, J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution 1603-1688*, (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1986), pp. 250, 274

of our ancient parliamentary system' but directed most of their ire at the religious policies set down in the *Agreement of the People*. The Watchmen attacked what they saw as the careless wording of the *Agreement* and criticised its central aims. They began their verbal assault with the following complaint: 'this agreement saith ... it is intended, that the Christian religion be held forth as the public profession in this nation &c. yet it doth not say by whom it is intended, nor tell us what is that Christian religion'. This was a problem, the Watchmen explained, because: 'all the errors and sects that are or have been in the Church of Christ, since the apostles days, do all lay claim to the title of Christian religion, and may all by this agreement plead ... the priviledge of publike profession'.⁵ The Watchmen's second stated grievance against the religious ideas of the *Agreement of the People* was that by its terms the head of a family could not compel his child or his servant to 'attend upon the publique means of instruction; but must leave him free.' Such a condition was, the Watchmen felt, contrary to the fourth commandment: 'that makes the governour of the family accountable for the sabbath of all that are under his roof'.⁶ At this point the Watchmen took the opportunity to condemn, albeit almost as an aside, the 'lamented and detested' *Book of Sports* but they did not linger on that subject of Sunday games, instead they moved swiftly on to condemn the clause in the *Agreement of the People* that, as they put it, allowed: 'such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, however differing in judgement from the doctrine, worship and discipline publikely held forth ... protection in the profession of their faith'. The Watchmen's objections to this clause sprang from the fact that it would serve to protect 'Anabaptists, Antinomians, Arminians, Arrians, Socinians, those that hold the most blasphemous error about the godhead of Christ, and of the holy spirit.'⁷ Nor were the Watchmen satisfied by the assurance in the *Agreement of the People* that protection in professing their faith would not be extended to defenders of 'popery and prelacy'. For, they complained, it

⁵ *ibid*, p. 6

⁶ *ibid*, p. 7

⁷ *ibid*, p. 8

was only stated that: ‘this liberty should not necessarily extend to popery and prelacy [and that] does not deny that arbitrarily it may: and though they tell us it is not intended that it should, yet those very words shew it was never intended that it should not.’⁸ In other words, the Watchmen wanted far more stringent controls on ‘popery and prelacy’ than those they felt were envisaged in the *Agreement of the People*.

Unfortunately, the Watchmen gave no definition of the word ‘prelacy’ but it is probable that they were referring specifically to episcopacy for in the last few lines of the *Watchword* they indicated that they believed the model for the English church should be ‘the best reformed churches’, a heading under which only non-episcopalian churches normally fell. More importantly, they refer to having taken the Solemn League and Covenant which had as one of its stated aims the ‘extirpation’ of episcopacy.⁹ The Watchmen’s exact words are: ‘Is this the reformation of religion according to the word of God, and the pattern of the best reformed churches? Is this the extirpation of popery, prelacie, superstition, heresie, schisme, profanesse, which we have covenanted and sworne with our hands lifted up to the most high God? Is this it which we have prayed for, waited for, engaged for, suffered, endured so many and great things for? That popery, prelacie, and all manner of errors and heresies, provided they profess faith in God by Jesus Christ should be tolerated and protected among us?’¹⁰ There can be no doubt that, as Puritans, the Watchmen expected each question to be answered with a resounding no.

The Essex *Testimony* was also written and signed by Puritans and like the *Watchword* it was written in response to another document. However, the document was not one with which they disagreed but, rather, one which they wholeheartedly supported: *The London Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ and of our Solemn League and Covenant*. The Essex ministers, like their London brethren, wrote their *Testimony* in order to make clear their belief that: ‘the Confession of Faith, Directorie

⁸ *ibid*, p. 10

⁹ Kenyon, (ed), *Stuart Constitution*, p. 240

¹⁰ *ibid*, p. 11

of Worship, and Humble Advice for Church Government, presented by the Reverend Assembly of Divines to the honourable parliament are (as we conceive) so agreeable to the word, that we cannot but exceedingly bless the name of God, for his presence in that Assembly; professing our hearty concurrence therein, and cheerfull readiness to submit thereto; resolving likewise to continue humble suitors at the throne of grace, that our gracious God in his due time would stirre up the parliament to establish the foresaid Confession of Faith, and Advice for Church Government with civil sanction, as they have already for the Directory of Worship.’¹¹ The *Testimony* continued: ‘we look upon our Solemne League and Covenant as a most choice blessing from God to these churches and kingdomes so happily united therein’.¹² The signatories to the *Testimony* did not only offer praise, though . They, like the Watchmen, were concerned by the question of toleration: ‘we judge it most agreeable to Christianity, that tender consciences of dissenting brethren bee tenderly dealt withall, yet we dare not carry in our bosomes such steely consciences, and rockie hearts, as not to mourne in our soules: that after those strong engagements, and such a solemn day of publike humiliation for supressing those growing and spreading errors and heresies, yet in stead thereof (under the colour of liberty of conscience) the same still are boldly and publikely vented and maintained, as much, if not more, than ever before, to the great dishonour of the dreadful name of Almighty God, the subversion of his most holy truth, the contempt of the publique worship, ordinancies, and ministerie of Jesus Christ’.¹³ And if it was not from this sufficiently clear how the signatories to the *Testimony* regarded ‘errors and heresies’, they closed their petition with a statement which would leave their readers in no doubt as to their opinion: ‘for our parts we do solemnlie and sincerely professe as in the presence of Almighty God the searcher and judge of all hearts, that from our soules we doe utterly detest and obhor, as all former cursed doctrines of Popery, Arminianisme and Socianisme: so likewise all the

¹¹ *Testimony*, p. 1

¹² *ibid*, p. 3

¹³ *ibid*, p. 3

damnable errors, heresies and blasphemies of these present evil times, whether Anti-Scripturists, Familists, Antinomians, Anti-Trinitarians, Arrians, Anabaptists, or whatsoever is found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of Godliness.’¹⁴ Thus the *Testimony* ends on a very similar note to the *Watchword* which is surely appropriate, for in the Puritan values they express the documents are very similar to each other.

Some clergymen who signed neither the *Watchword* nor the *Testimony*, nevertheless, left other evidence of their Puritan beliefs. Robert Mercer, who had by 1647 moved from St Peter’s, Colchester to a parish in London, signed the London *Testimony* in response to which the Essex *Testimony* was produced.¹⁵ Stephen Marshall, vicar of Finchingfield, Obadiah Sedgewick, vicar of Coggeshall and Matthias Styles, rector of Orsett were all active members of the ‘learned and Godly’ Westminster Assembly of Divines, the Puritan body to which the signatories to the *Testimony* so earnestly gave their support. And, of course, the Puritanism of Marshall and Sedgewick is apparent too from their books and sermons.¹⁶ John Dodd, who as vicar must have been at least partially responsible for allowing the controversial Puritan lecturer Edward Sparrowhawke to preach at Coggeshall in 1637, seems to have been a Puritan too. Certainly, he would have had a close working relationship with his son and curate Nehemiah, whose Puritanism has already been established.¹⁷ Ceasar Calendrine, erstwhile rector of Stapleford Abbotts in Essex, must have been a Puritan too because he was pastor to the congregation of the Presbyterian Dutch Church of Austin Friars, London from 1639 to 1665. Indeed, still to be found within the church archives is a declaration that boasts the signatures of fourteen ministers

¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 3-4

¹⁵ *Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ and of our Solemn League and Covenant as also Against Heresies and Blasphemies of this Time, and the Toleration of Them*, (London, 1647), p. 36

¹⁶ Both Marshall and Sedgewick were prolific authors and there is certainly not room to list all their works here but Sedgewick’s Puritan beliefs come across strongly in: O. Sedgewick, *The Doubting Beleever*, (London, 1641); O. Sedgewick, *An Arke Against a Deluge*, (London, 1644) and O. Sedgewick, *The Nature and Danger of Heresies*, (London, 1647). Marshall’s Puritanism is clear from his works: S. Marshall, *Meroz Cursed*, (London, 1641), *Reformation and Dessolation*, (London, 1642) and *Godly Man’s*, (London, 1680)

¹⁷ PRO SP 16 350 54

including William Gouge, John Firmin, John Morse and Matthias Styles and attests that Calendrine was ‘orthodox and constant to the faith of the reformed churches’.¹⁸

Thomas Weld, vicar of Terling, marked himself out as a Puritan by the nonconformity to the Prayer Book ceremonies for which he was deprived of his living in 1631.¹⁹ John Stalham, Weld’s successor at Terling was indicted in 1638 for the anti-Laudinan offence of ‘going out of the rayle and administering the communion to most of the principall parishioners out of the rayle’ and in 1639 for the Puritan misdemeanour of ‘not wearing the surplice’.²⁰ He can also be identified as a Puritan because of his published work.²¹ Fourteen other Essex clergymen declared their Puritanism in the 1630s by refusing to abide by the Prayer Book ceremonies, although none of them lost their parishes as a result. Samuel Borphet, rector of High Laver, administered the communion to seated recipients, as did John Fenner, rector of Rochford and Edmund Brewer, vicar of Castle Hedingham. In addition, Brewer baptised without using the sign of the cross and refused to wear the surplice.²² The offences of Nathaniel Bosse, curate of Terling, were similar to those of Brewer. Specifically, he did not wear the surplice, did not use of the sign of the cross in baptism, did not conduct services according to the requirements of the Prayer Book and administered the communion to seated recipients.²³ Henry Greenwood’s acts of nonconformity were different. The minister of Hempsted and Great Sampford did not read divine prayers on holy days and festival days and did not always use the surplice. The vicar of Earls Colne, John Hawkesby, baptised without using the sign of the cross

¹⁸ The other ministers who signed the declaration were Thomas Wynnff, dean of St. Paul’s and rector of Lambourne, John Grant of South Benfleet, John Peachiver of Havering atte Bower, Samuel Hord of Moreton, William Young of Greensted, Daniel Joyner of Chipping Ongar, Anthony Sabridge of Stondon, Samuel Fisher of Navestock, Edward Greene of Shelley and Theodore Herring of Doddinghurst. Wynnff, who became bishop of Lincoln 1641, and Fisher both suffered in the 1640s. The others are not known Puritans but all retained their livings during the Civil War. Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 37-38

¹⁹ ERO D/ACA 46, f. 94v

²⁰ ERO D/ACA 54, f. 88v, D/ACA 52, f. 226v

²¹ See especially J. Stalham, *A Catechisme for Children in Yeares and Children in Understanding*, (London, 1644) and J. Stalham, *The Summe of a Conference at Terling in Essex, January 11th, 1643, Touching Infant Baptism*, (London, 1644)

²² ERO D/AEA 38, f. 45r, D AEA 41, f. 183v, PRO SP 16/339/53, PRO SP 16/351/100

²³ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 29v

and did not insist that communicants knelt.²⁴ Joseph Holdsworth, rector of Ramsden Crays, was presented ‘for omitting to read divine service divers holy days and for going out of the rail to administer the communion to his parishioners and for not wearing the surplice many times at the reading of prayers and administering the sacrament’.²⁵ At Romford too the surplice was rarely used. Nor was that the only offence of John Morse, the minister there. He also got into trouble with the authorities for giving communion to those sitting and ‘deliver[ing] the cup not severally to every communicant as the 21st canon enjoins.’²⁶ Another presented for acts of nonconformity was Thomas Peck, vicar of Prittlewell. His offences were to give communion to those who refused to kneel and to refuse always to use the surplice and the sign of the cross in baptism.²⁷ Thomas Witham, rector of Mistley cum Manningtree went one step further than Peck in one respect at least, he refused even to keep a surplice in the chapel at Manningtree.²⁸ In addition, Witham did not hold services on holy days.²⁹ Samuel Wharton, vicar of Felsted, unlike the clergymen already mentioned, came to the attention of the authorities not because of his actions but because of the nonconformity of his preaching.³⁰ The final three Essex ministers for whom evidence of nonconformity survives: John Broday, John Carver and Edward Jeffrey were described at the Metropolitcal Visitation of 1637 simply as ‘not conformable in preaching or practise’.³¹

Significant as the acts of nonconformity committed by all the ministers mentioned above are, it must be remembered that most Puritans seem to have conformed fully during in the pre-Civil War Period. Of the thirty six Puritan ministers whose names are given above, only the sixteen whose names are given in the previous paragraph were nonconformists. The rest of the Puritans mentioned in

²⁴ PRO SP 16/339/53, SP 16/351/100

²⁵ ERO D/ABA 8, f. 233v

²⁶ PRO SP 16/339/53, SP 16/351/100

²⁷ ERO D/ALV 2, f. 109v-r

²⁸ ERO D/AEA 48, f. 202v

²⁹ LMA DL/C 319, f. 39v-r

³⁰ PRO SP 16/339/53, SP 16/351/100

³¹ PRO SP 16/175/104

this chapter were moderates, those who conformed to the Prayer Book ceremonies before the outbreak of hostilities but enthusiastically embraced the religious changes of the Civil War and Interregnum. On the whole, those who were moderate in their approach in the 1630s can be so classified as Puritans only because they signed either the *Watchword* or the *Testimony*, but can these petitions, written as they were in 1648, be used as evidence for what ministers believed a decade earlier? After all, clergymen could have altered their beliefs after the outbreak of war in order to conform to the now ascendant Puritanism. Without dismissing altogether the notion that one or two ministers may have rapidly adopted Puritanism in the 1640s, having apparently previously favoured other religious forms, it should be pointed out that clergymen were generally men whose convictions ran too deep to be altered without a sound theological reason. Even if a couple of ministers had decided that a change in prevailing opinion was sufficient reason to revise their views and practices, they might not have been able to retain their livings until the late 1640s, the time at which the presbyterian petitions and declarations were being signed, for most who had ever advocated Laudianism or even the pre-Laudian ceremonies were deprived of their livings in the early 1640s. As none of the clergymen cited above suffered deprivation, or even aroused suspicion for their beliefs, at the time of the sequestrations, it is probable that all had been Puritans for some years prior to the commencement of hostilities in 1642. More significant, perhaps, is the fact that clergymen could choose freely whether or not to sign the *Testimony* and the *Watchword* for their clerical livings were not dependent on their signatures. That many incumbents put their name to neither document adds weight to the argument that those who did sign them did so out of principle.

Of course, it is highly unlikely that the clergymen named above were the only Puritans who worked in Essex prior to the outbreak of the English Civil War; there were almost certainly Puritan ministers in Essex who were not nonconformists, did not sign either the *Watchword* or the *Testimony* and did not leave any written or published evidence of their beliefs. However, the thirty six Puritan clergymen

discussed in this chapter form a more than sufficient group for the purposes of comparison between Puritans and Laudians.

The Sources for Clerical Laudianism in Essex

Any discussion about the sources by which Laudianism can be identified is complicated by the argument of Ian Green that the type of sources in question cannot be trusted to provide an accurate representation of the facts. It is therefore necessary to demonstrate that the sources are reliable before explaining exactly how they can be used as evidence for Laudianism. The historical records on which Green casts doubt are the depositions given by parishioners against clergymen in the early 1640 s.

The original depositions are now for the most part lost, so transcripts and secondary sources are invaluable, especially John White's *The First Century of Scandalous Malignant Priests*, (1643) John Walker's *The Sufferings of the Clergy*, (1714) British Library Additional Manuscripts 5829 (an eighteenth century transcript of the twenty original sets of depositions given by parishioners against Essex ministers) and A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (1948). Green, who has examined not only these but also other collections of sources on clerical sequestrations for other counties, doubts the accuracy of the depositions. The least controversial of the claims made by Green is that the depositions cannot be used to compile complete lists of Royalist clergymen, drunken clergymen or Laudian clergymen because they were not collected or drawn up systematically. The result of this was, Green argues, that some clergymen were sequestered for their support for the King or for excessive drinking or for insisting that communicants knelt at the rails to receive but it was never even discovered that other clergymen did likewise and therefore their names do not appear in the records. That the depositions are flawed in this way is almost certainly correct but is Green justified in his further argument that the depositions are substantially inaccurate or are they a genuine record of the grievances held by parishioners against ministers?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to explore Green's viewpoint a little more fully. It is his opinion that the depositions are principally a reflection of the attitudes of small groups of gentry within each county. Green believes that, organised on a county by county basis, these members of the gentry coerced reluctant parishioners into signing or repeating pre-written depositions expressing discontent with their ministers which they did not, on the whole, feel.³² Green focuses on several points which he believes support his case that witnesses to the Commons' and County Committees for the Scandalous Ministers were 'well primed'. First and most important, in Green's opinion, is the fact that although the phrases used in the depositions varied from county to county, within each county a very similar expression might be used about several different clergymen. For example, whilst in Essex more than one minister was accused of enforcing 'illegal innovations', in Suffolk ministers were accused instead of enforcing 'Bishop Wren's injunctions'. Green is suspicious of the depositions too because the longer the war progressed, the more numerous became the charges against each clergyman. Also indicative of the unreliability of the depositions is, Green suggests, the fact that charges of drunkenness, debauchery and adultery were less common earlier than later in the war.³³

Green's argument is not without an element of truth. It is accurate to say that a few phrases reappeared time and again in the depositions, nor can it be denied that the depositions lengthened as the war continued, equally charges of immoral behaviour were more frequently made in 1644 than in 1642. However, none of this should be taken as evidence that the depositions were concocted rather than spontaneous. Most official records are to an extent formulaic. The archdeaconry court records, for example, follow a definite pattern. The phraseology of the depositions may reflect only the idiosyncrasies of the recording clerk as he translated

³² I. Green, 'The Persecution of 'Scandalous' and 'Malignant' Parish Clergy During the English Civil War', *English Historical Review*, 94, (1979), pp. 518-519

³³ *ibid*, p. 511

oral into written testimony. Or it can be explained by a careful examination of the oft repeated phrases. To simplify matters, the expressions will be divided into two categories: the first consisting of those that refer to religious ‘offences’ and the second of those that refer to unacceptable sexual or social behaviour.

The religious activities with which clergymen in Essex were most commonly charged involved ‘promoting’ or ‘favouring ceremonies’, practising ‘illegal innovations’ and refusing to give the sacrament except at the altar rails. The first two complaints, which refer to the Prayer Book ceremonies, must have been made by Puritans for only they objected to such rituals; the last two complaints are, by contrast, a reference to Laudianism, which antagonised Prayer Book Protestants as well as Puritans and may well have provoked criticism from both groups. Of course, it cannot be proved that Prayer Book Protestants and Puritans alike spoke out against Laudianism but even if all four accusations were made on every occasion by Puritans, this does not render them any less true or deeply felt. There are only a limited number of ways in which it can be stated that a clergymen positively encouraged ceremonies. In particular, the repeated use of the word ceremonies should not surprise, for the sign of the cross, the use of the surplice and kneeling at communion were thus described in every publication from the Prayer Book downwards. There are, of course, more ways in which it can be said that a clergyman refused to give the sacrament from anywhere except the rails but it must be remembered that not all witnesses used these phrases. Indeed, it was relatively common for witnesses to mention the altar rails without accusing the minister of only giving communion from that place. Edward Jenkinson of Panfield was accused of having the ‘communion table set altarwise and railed in’.³⁴ John Cross, vicar of Gosfield was said to have ‘railed in the altar before others’.³⁵ Thomas Wilson, rector at Wimbish, was charged with setting up and paying for the altar rails ‘a year before the injunction’.³⁶ John Jegon of Sible Hedingham was

³⁴ White, p. 15

³⁵ Matthews, p. 149

³⁶ *ibid*, p. 169

spoken of as ‘active in setting up the rails’.³⁷ William Frost, rector of Middleton was described as ‘froward to set up the communion rails’.³⁸ Finally, Nicholas Wright of Theydon Garnon was disliked because he set the communion table altarwise ‘with steps into it and rails around it’.³⁹ The importance of this evidence is that it demonstrates that references to altar rails did not necessarily go hand in hand with complaints about the giving of communion. Furthermore, it was not the case that deponents who were concerned with the giving and receiving of the bread and wine automatically accused their minister of ‘refusing to give the sacrament except at the rails’; sometimes they used different words to express the same meaning. Edward Thurman, rector of Hallingbury, was said to have ‘made parishioners come to the rails’, Robert Snell of Matching was criticised because he ‘only gave the sacrament at the rails’ and it was written of Samuel Sowthen, vicar of Manuden that he ‘only delivered the sacrament at the rails’.⁴⁰ Even if witnesses did say that a particular clergyman had ‘refused to give the sacrament except at the rails’, they might add unique details which suggest that they were speaking on their own initiative. For example, deponents against Thomas Newcomen, who officiated at the Colchester parishes of Holy Trinity and St. Runwald’s, added that he ‘prosecuted those who did not come up to receive the sacrament’.⁴¹ In short, it is wrong to exaggerate the extent or significance of the repetition of any one phrase concerning receipt of communion at the altar rails for quite often witnesses mentioned the rails in other contexts, used different expressions to make the same point or provided extra information in addition to the commonly used phrase. When these three facts are taken into account, Green’s argument that the depositions were mostly fabricated becomes a lot more difficult to sustain.

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 155

³⁸ *ibid*, p. 153

³⁹ White, p. 19

⁴⁰ *ibid*, pp. 5, 6, 48

⁴¹ Matthews, p. 159

A careful examination of witnesses' expressions relating to irresponsible social or sexual behaviour further undermines Green's case. Only five descriptions of unseemly conduct appear in the depositions with any frequency. The five phrases in question accuse clergymen of being 'common' swearers, of having sworn by their 'faith and troth', of having expressed 'malignancy against Parliament', of being 'tipplers' or of 'frequenting ale houses and taverns'.⁴² The regularity with which the final two of these phrases occur is tempered by the additional, unique detail that often accompanies them. For example, George Crackenthorpe, rector of Bradwell by Coggeshall, was a 'tippler' who had been seen to 'reel and stagger ... several times drunk coming from Braintree',⁴³ John Lake of Great Saling was 'a tippler even on Saturday nights',⁴⁴ the rector of Middleton, William Frost, was a 'tippler' who indulged in 'drinking fits in the Crown in Sudbury',⁴⁵ John Chamberlin, curate to the congregation at Little Maplestead, was a 'frequenter of alehouses' who had been known to drink on six days in one week and Clement Vincent of Danbury was 'oftentimes overtaken with drink'.⁴⁶

It was less common, but not unusual, for a witness to furnish details about the nature of the 'malignancy' expressed against Parliament. For example, witnesses recalled that the parson at Pentlow, Edward Alston, had claimed that Parliament 'made laws by authority but broke them without authority which was mere hypocrisy',⁴⁷ whilst Thomas Darnell of Thorpe was quoted as having said that he wished to see 'he that should not conform to his Prince in religion...burnt'.⁴⁸ It should also be pointed out that the witnesses against the Essex ministers George Beardsell, John Browning, Edward Cherry, Timothy Clay, Daniel Falconer, Nehemiah Rogers, Edward Shepherd and Emmanuel Uty detailed the anti-Parliamentarian

⁴² Green, 'The Persecution of 'Scandalous' and 'Malignant' Parish Clergy', pp. 510-511

⁴³ BL Add MS 5829, f. 28

⁴⁴ *ibid*, fo. 15

⁴⁵ *ibid*, fo. 32

⁴⁶ *ibid*, fo. 26

⁴⁷ White, p. 22

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 29

sentiments of their clergyman without recourse to the phrase that they had 'expressed malignancy against Parliament.'⁴⁹

Witnesses rarely elaborated on the claim that their clergyman were 'common' swearers, but this is perhaps not surprising given that it would be difficult for them to do so unless they repeated the language about which they were complaining. The witnesses who claimed that their clergymen swore by their faith or by their troth were probably telling the truth. Arthur Dent, writing in 1601, had identified these expressions as two of the four most common used by those who swore. The other two, 'by our Lady' and 'by St. Mary', were more offensive phrases and thus it would seem probable that they were less likely to be uttered by clergymen.⁵⁰

To the evidence demonstrating that, aside from the occasional repetitions, the depositions were diverse, full of unique detail and thus unlikely to have been concocted can be added pieces of information from other sources which corroborate the claims of the witnesses. For instance, the rector of Danbury, Clement Vincent, was presented to the Commissary Court in 1636 'for being oftentimes overtaken with drink'. Perhaps on one or two of these occasions Vincent was with Humphrey Mildmay, certainly several entries in the latter's diary also attest to Vincent's drunkenness. In any case, both documents add credence to a deponent's accusation that Vincent was 'a common drunkard'.⁵¹ One of the misdemeanours of which the vicar of Tollesbury, Peter Allen, was accused in the depositions is recorded elsewhere too. Indeed, the clergyman confessed to 'fornication' with Frances Smith a decade before he was charged with the same offence by those seeking his sequestration. Like Allen, Alexander Read of Fyfield himself provided the evidence from which the truth of one of the allegations made against him can be established. He did so by justifying bowing to the altar, one of the offences with which he was accused in 1643, in a

⁴⁹ Matthews, pp. 145, 147, 162; White, p. 3; BL Add MS 5829, fos 17, 47; BL Add MS 5829, fo 12, White, p. 1

⁵⁰ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 201

⁵¹ BL Harleian MS 454, ff. 31v, 32r

sermon published in 1636.⁵² One of the charges against Thomas Newcomen can be verified in a different way for the records of the Archdeaconry Court of Colchester show that Newcomen did, as parishioners said, prosecute those who refused to receive the sacrament at the altar rails.⁵³ The charges against Richard Drake and Daniel Whitby, rectors of Radwinter and Theydon Mount respectively, can be more comprehensively vindicated because both men set down in full the court proceedings that led to their sequestrations. These are a record not only of the accusations made against them but also of the replies they made to each charge. Both Drake and Whitby crafted their answers carefully and both sought to avoid admitting directly to the truth of any of the allegations but neither did they deny the charges brought against them. For all their word play, Drake and Whitby demonstrated that their accusers were, on the whole, speaking the truth.⁵⁴

It cannot be assumed, however, that witnesses necessarily always presented a full representation of the beliefs and actions of their cleric. Some of the depositions, for example, those made against Francis Wright, vicar of Witham, were rather unspecific. Others, despite their detail, do not contain evidence of the full spectrum of the clergyman's beliefs and practices. Books and sermons written by John Browning, Alexander Read, Edward Symmonds and Daniel Whitby provide evidence that these four men at least held ideas and performed rituals not mentioned by witnesses. But since no source is fully comprehensive, the limitations of the depositions should not trouble the historian too much. Reflecting as they do the prejudices, priorities and awareness of the witnesses about religious and political issues, the depositions are valid, accurate and useful pieces of historical evidence.

The depositions have any number of possible uses but here they have been used only as a means by which Laudian clergymen may be identified. What words and phrases within these sources have provided evidence that a minister was a

⁵² A. Read, *A Sermon Preached at a Visitation at Brentwood in Essex*, (London, 1636) p. 20

⁵³ ERO D'ACA 52, f. 23r, D'ACA 53, f. 9v-r, 17v-r, 24r, 25r, 239v-r

⁵⁴ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, ff. 46v-52v; D. Whitby, *The Vindication of a True Protestant*, (London, 1644), *passim*

Laudian? And what have been thought to show no more than that a clergyman was irresponsible or of a certain political persuasion? To answer the second of these questions first, it is obvious that several offences for which clergymen were routinely sequestered are not, on their own, evidence of Laudianism. For example, ministers ejected only for secular offences such as drunkenness, adultery, debauchery or swearing cannot be labelled as Laudians for, contrary to Puritan propaganda, proneness to such activities does not indicate anything about a clergyman's religious beliefs; indeed, many Laudians condemned drunkenness, swearing and uncontrolled sexual behaviour as strongly as their Puritan contemporaries. Equally, pastors ejected simply for 'political' offences, such as 'expressing malignancy against Parliament', refusing to take the Covenant or the Protestation or for speaking out against the Civil War cannot be assumed to be Laudians for 'Royalists' were not necessarily also Laudians. On a different note, it should be stressed that support for the *Book of Sports* was not an exclusively Laudian trait so clergymen accused of this alone have not been added to the list of those who supported Laudianism. Furthermore, ministers charged with 'promoting' or 'favouring ceremonies' cannot be considered to be Laudians merely on this basis because an individual who supported the Prayer Book ceremonies did not necessarily extend his support to Laudianism.

The above deals with the reasons why ministers have been excluded from the Laudian list. But what are the reasons for their inclusion? The majority of clergymen who have been categorised as supporters of Laudianism are those described as insisting on practices that were unambiguously Laudian. Firstly there are the twenty two ministers who compelled communicants to receive the sacrament at the altar rails: Peter Allen, vicar of Tollesbury, John Chamberlin, curate of Little Maplestead, Edward Cherry, rector of Great Holland, Timothy Clay, rector of Wickham St. Pauls. Samuel Cock, rector of St. Giles', Colchester, Thomas Darnell, vicar of Thorpe-Le-Soken, Robert Guyon, curate of White Colne, Timothy Heard, vicar of Takeley, Gregory Holland, rector of West Bergholt, John Jegon, rector of Sible Hedingham, Edward Jenkinson, parson of Panfield, John Lake, vicar of Great Saling.

Thomas Newcomen, rector of St. Runwald's and Holy Trinity, Colchester. John Simpson, rector of Mount Bures, Robert Snell, vicar of Matching, Samuel Sowthen, vicar of Manuden, Edward Thurman, rector of Hallingbury, Jeffrey Watts, vicar of Clavering, Daniel Whitby, rector of Theydon Mount and Stephen Withers, parson of Kelvedon Hatch.⁵⁵ Secondly, there are those who took the initiative in setting the communion table altar wise and railing it in, John Cross, vicar of Gosfield, William Frost, rector of Middleton, Thomas Wilson, rector of Wimbish and Nicholas Wright, rector of Theydon Garnon, were Laudians too.⁵⁶ Thirdly, there are the clergymen who bowed to the altar rails: Erasmus Laud, rector of Little Tey, John Mow, curate of Bardfield, Alexander Read, rector of Fyfield and Edward Shepherd of Great Maplestead.⁵⁷ Standing alone is John Browning who was described by his detractors as 'a noted Arminian and altar adorer'.⁵⁸ Those accused more cryptically of using 'illegal' or 'superstitious innovations' - Edward Alston, parson of Pentlow, Edward Turner, parson of St. Lawrence, Clement Vincent, rector of Danbury and Joseph Long, vicar at Fingringhoe and Great Clacton - have also been added to the Laudian list for the said 'innovations' were surely the ceremonial changes introduced by Laud.⁵⁹ One other clergyman can be identified as a Laudian from a set of depositions: John Duncon, rector of Rettendon. Unusually, the depositions in question were not specifically against him; they were against his patron, Matthew Wren, bishop of Norwich, but Duncon's practices at his parish of Stoke in Suffolk were still described in some detail. He was 'complained of for many grosse idolatrous adorations and superstitions: and for deniing such of his parish as come not to the raile, the receiving

⁵⁵ White, pp. 1, 3, 5, 15, 19, 21, 31, 45, 48; Matthews, pp. 148, 149, 153, 155, 157, 159, 162, 163, 167. Matthews does not include in his book the evidence that Brian Walton, rector of Sandon, Essex and minister at St. Orgars, Cannon Street, London compelled parishioners to receive the sacrament from an altarwise, east end communion table. Nor does he mention that Walton was accused of bowing towards the altar. However, a record of Walton doing both these things is to be found in *The Articles and Charge Proved in Parliament Against Dr. Walton, Minister of St. Orgars, Cannon Street*. (London, 1641), pp. 2-3

⁵⁶ White, p. 19; Matthews, pp. 149, 153, 169

⁵⁷ White, p. 31; Matthews, p. 162; BL Add MS 5829, f. 56

⁵⁸ W. H. Coates, V. F. Snow and A. Steele Young, (eds), *Private Journals of the Long Parliament*, (London, 1982-1997), p. 1

⁵⁹ White, pp. 21, 29, 36; Matthews, p. 158

of the communion.’ It was further stated that Duncon made ‘frequent adorations to and towards the table or altar sett upp at the east end of the church and to the sacrament [and] was not ashamed to maintaine that ther was a holines in the communion table, in the timber of the church and in the surplice.’⁶⁰

A few clergymen who do not from depositions appear to be Laudians have been thus categorised because other evidence attests to this. Richard Drake, rector of Radwinter, revealed his Laudianism in his written work, which will be fully discussed in chapter two.⁶¹ Of the beliefs of John Alsop, rector of Fordham, it is possible to be less sure but he seems likely to have been a Laudian for he was chaplain to Archbishop Laud.⁶² Francis Wright, vicar of Witham and Thomas Wiborow, rector of Pebmarsh, on the other hand, must have been Laudians for it is clear from the court records that they insisted that communicants receive the sacraments at the rails.⁶³ Similarly, Alexander Bonyman of Kelvedon Easterford has been adjudged to be a Laudian partly because the altar rails were erected in the east end of his church as soon as the order was given so to do in 1636, which could not have occurred without his co-operation, but more importantly because at the Metropolitan Visitation of 1636 Nathaniel Brent, Laud’s vicar general had confessed himself unable to find any significant problems with the way worship was conducted in Kelvedon Easterford. That Brent gave worship in Kelvedon Easterford his seal of approval indicates that the Laudian innovations were being implemented in full by the vicar of that parish.⁶⁴ Robert Warren, who served the parish of Borley in Essex, as well as that of Long Melford in Suffolk, must have been a Laudian too, for as an agent of the Bishop of Norwich, Matthew Wren, he enforced the Laudian reforms in Suffolk and gained a reputation as ‘a great stickler about the late innovacons’.⁶⁵ Individuals such as

⁶⁰ S. D’ewes, *The Journal of Sir Simonds D’Ewes From the Beginning of the Long Parliament to the Opening of the Trial of the Earl of Strafford*, ed. W. Notestein, (London, 1923), p. 298

⁶¹ Bodleian Library Rawlinson MS D159,

⁶² Laud, *Works, Volume II*, p. 444; Matthews, p. 145

⁶³ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 219r, AF 35 81/H 9

⁶⁴ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 106v-r.

⁶⁵ Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 68, f. 78r. I am grateful to Mr. John Walter for this reference.

Warren serve as a reminder that evidence for Laudianism amongst the clergy is not to be found only in the depositions. Nevertheless, taken together the depositions comprise the most useful record of Laudianism amongst the clergy.

Altogether forty Laudian clergymen and thirty six Puritan clergymen have been identified in this thesis. That this excludes others who cannot now be traced or assigned to their respective categories is virtually certain for the survival of sources is somewhat patchy. However, this is certainly not an argument for failing to utilise in full the documents that are extant. The sources that do exist contain information which is reliable, interesting and, most importantly, adds to our knowledge of the extent and nature of Laudianism and Puritanism. Therefore, they form an excellent basis from which to research further the intricacies of Laudianism and Puritanism and the responses they provoked from the laity.

LIST OF ESSEX LAUDIAN CLERGY WITH THEIR PARISHES[#]

1. Peter Allen	Vicar of Tollesbury	1616 - 1643
2. John Alsop	Rector of Fordham	1633 - 1643
3. Edward Alston	Parson of Pentlow	1623 - 1643
4. Alexander Bonyman	Rector of Kelvedon Easterford	1629 - 1640
5.	Rector of Pleshy	1640 - 1641
6. John Browning	Rector of Great Easton	1634 - 1639
7.	Rector of Rawreth	1629 - 1639
8. John Chamberlin	Curate of Little Maplestead	1637 - 1644
9. Edward Cherry	Rector of Great Holland	1633 - 1643
10.	Curate of St. Osyth	? - 1643
11. Timothy Clay	Rector of Wickham St. Paul	? - 1643
12. Samuel Cock	Rector of St. Giles', Colchester	c.1630 - 1644
13. John Cross	Vicar of Gosfield	1628 - 1644
14. Thomas Darnell	Vicar of Thorpe-Le-Soken	? - 1643
15. Richard Drake	Rector of Radwinter	1638 - 1645
16. William Frost	Rector of Middleton	1624 - 1644
17. Robert Guyon	Curate of White Colne	1634 - 1644
18. Timothy Heard	Vicar of Takeley	1629 - 1643
19. Gregory Holland	Rector of West Bergholt	1613 - 1652
20. Edward Jenkinson	Rector of Panfield	1628 - 1643
21. Thomas King	Vicar of Chrishall	1637 - 1643
22.	Vicar of Great Chishall	1637 - 1643
23. John Jegon	Rector of Sible Hedingham	c.1629 - 1643
24. John Lake	Vicar of Great Saling	1617 - 1643
25. Erasmus Laud	Rector of Little Tey	1631 - 1643
26. Joseph Long	Vicar of Fingringhoe	1638 - 1644
27.	Vicar of Great Clacton	1629 - 1662
28. John Mow	Curate at Bardfield	? - c.1644
29. Thomas Newcomen	Rector of Holy Trinity, Colchester	1628 - 1642
30.	Rector of St. Runwald's, Colchester	c.1633 - 1642
31. Alexander Read	Rector of Fyfield	1630 - 1643
32. Edward Shephard	Vicar of Great Maplestead	1639 - 1643
33. John Simpson	Rector of Mount Bures	1616 - 1644
34. Robert Snell	Vicar of Matching	1608 - 1643
35. Samuel Sowthen	Vicar of Manuden	1630 - 1643
36. Edward Thurman	Rector of Great Hallingbury	1629 - 1643
37. Edward Turner	Parson of St. Lawrence	1639 - 1643
38. Clement Vincent	Rector of Danbury	1628 - 1643
39. Brian Walton	Rector of Sandon	1636 - 1642
40. Robert Warren	Rector of Borley	1616 - 1641
41. Jeffrey Watts	Vicar of Clavering	1616 - 1643
42.	Rector of Great Leighs	1619 - c.1650
43. Daniel Whitby	Rector of Theydon Mount	1637 - 1647
44. Thomas Wiborow	Rector of Pebmarsh	1634 - 1644

[#] The numbers on this list correspond with the numbers given to the parishes on the map of Laudian and Puritan parishes in Essex on page 42.

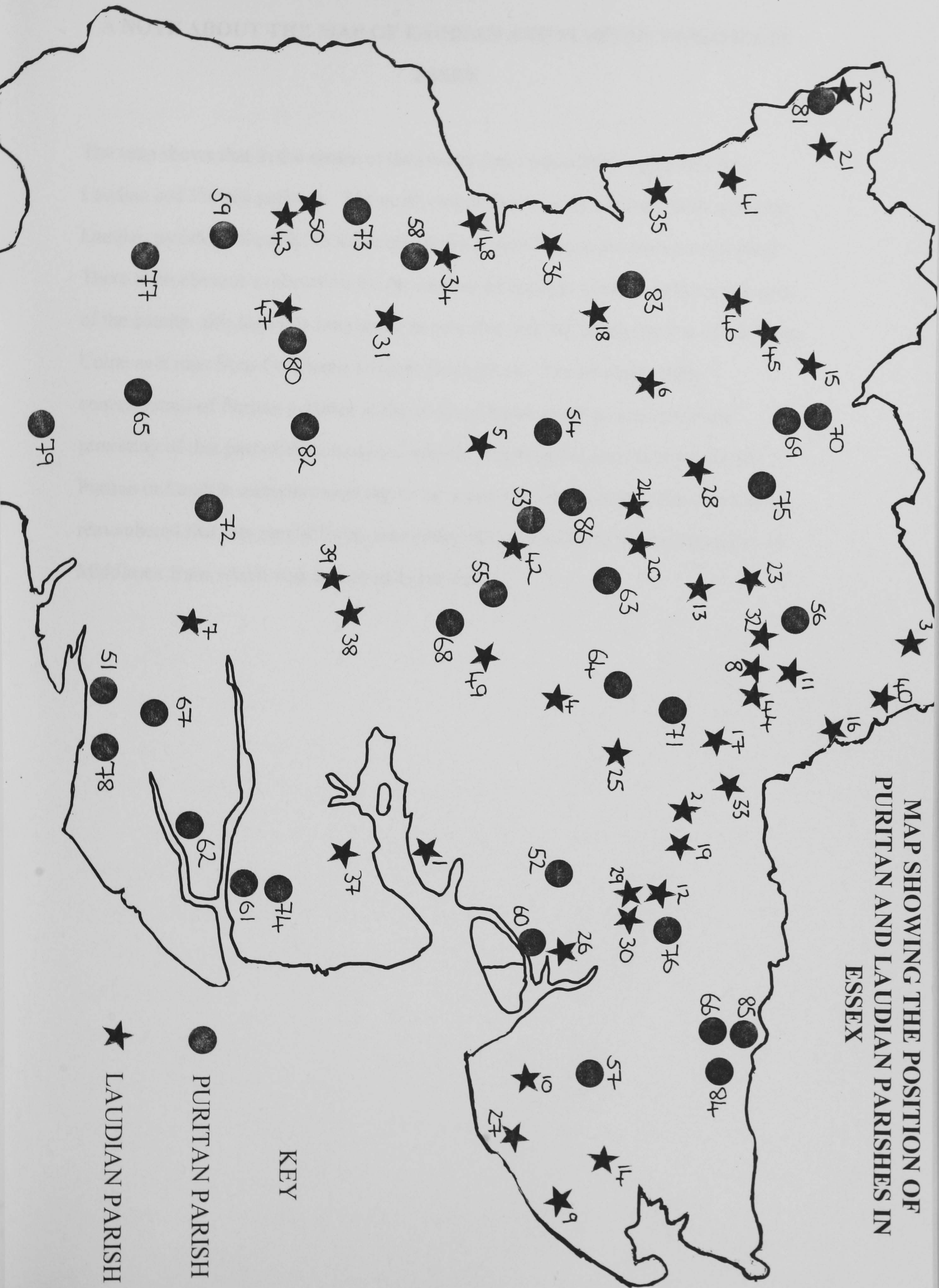
45. Thomas Wilson	Rector of Wimbish	1625 - 1643
46.	Rector of Debden	1629 - 1643
47. Stephen Withers	Rector of Kelvedon Hatch	1607 - 1643
48.	Rector of Sheering	1613 - 1647
49. Francis Wright	Vicar of Witham	1628 - 1643
50. Nicholas Wright	Rector of Theydon Garnon	1624 - 1643

LIST OF ESSEX PURITAN CLERGY WITH THEIR PARISHES[#]

51. John Argor	Rector of Leigh on Sea	1639 - 1640
52.	Curate of Layer-de-la-Hay	1634 - 1639
53. John Beadle	Rector of Little Leighs	1632 - 1656
54.	Rector of Barnston	1632 - 1662
55. Nathaniel Bosse	Curate of Terling	c.1630 - 1631
56. Edmund Brewer	Vicar of Castle Hedingham	1637 - 1658
57. Joseph Broday	Rector of Great Bentley	? - 1631
58. Samuel Borphet	Rector of High Laver	1636? - 1662
59. Caesar Calendrine	Rector of Stapleford Abbotts	1620 - 1640
60. Nathaniel Carr	Rector of Langenhoe	1618 - 1645
61. John Carver	Vicar of Burnham	1619? - 1639
62. Josiah Church	Curate of Pagglesham	1637 - 1641
63. Samuel Collins	Vicar of Braintree	1611 - 1661
64. John Dodd	Vicar of Coggeshall	1609 - 1639
64. Nathaniel Dodd	Curate of Coggeshall	? - 1639
65. Daniel Duckfield	Rector of Childerditch	1611 - 1662
66. John Edes	Rector of Lawford	1615 - 1663
67. John Fenner	Rector of Rochford	1629 - c.1636
68. Henry Greenwood	Rector of Hatfield Peverell	1596 - 1601
69.	Rector of Great Samford	1601 - 1634
70.	Vicar of Hempsted	1601 - 1634
71. John Hawkesby	Vicar of Earl's Colne	c.1636 - 1640
72. Joseph Holdsworth	Rector of Ramsden Crays	1630 - 1645
73. Simon Lynch	Vicar of North Weald	1592 - 1650
74. Edward Jeffrey	Rector of Southminster	1615 - c. 1637
75. Stephen Marshall	Vicar of Finchingfield	1636 - 1640
76. Robert Mercer	Vicar of St. Peter's, Colchester	1630 - 1645
77. John Morse	Chaplain of Romford	c.1615-c.1637
69. Samuel Newton	Rector of Great Sampford	1634 - 1683
70.	Vicar of Hempsted	1634 - 1683
78. Thomas Peck	Vicar of Prittlewell	1633 - 1662
64. Obadiah Sedgewick	Vicar of Coggeshall	1639 - 1660
55. John Stalham	Vicar of Terling	1632 - 1662
79. Mathias Stiles	Rector of Orsett	1610 - 1640
80. Nathaniel Ward	Rector of Stondon Massey	1628 - 1633
55. Thomas Weld	Vicar of Terling	1625 - 1631
81. James Willet	Rector of Little Chishall	1621 - 1662
82. John Willis	Rector of Ingatestone	1630 - 1662
83. George Wilson	Vicar of Elsenham	?1629 - ?1650
84 + 85. Thomas Witham	Rector of Mistley cum Manningtree	1610 - 1643
86. Samuel Wharton	Vicar of Felsted	1614 - 1641

[#] The numbers on this list correspond with the numbers given to the parishes on the map of Laudian and Puritan parishes on page 42.

MAP SHOWING THE POSITION OF PURITAN AND LAUDIAN PARISHES IN ESSEX



A NOTE ABOUT THE MAP OF LAUDIAN AND PURITAN PARISHES IN ESSEX

The map shows that in the centre of the county there was a fairly equal mix of Laudian and Puritan parishes. The north east of Essex is, by contrast, dominated by Laudian parishes. Equally, in the south of the county Puritan parishes predominate. There is no obvious explanation for the number of Laudian parishes in the north east of the county, although it is interesting to note that they fall along the line of the River Colne as it runs from Colchester to Sible Hedingham. The relatively high concentration of Puritan parishes in the south of Essex could be a result of the proximity of that part of the county to London. There are no known examples of Puritan or Laudian ministers working in the south west of the county but it should be remembered that this part of Essex was under the jurisdiction of the archdeaconry of Middlesex from which very few records survive.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LAUDIANISM OF RICHARD DRAKE

Laudianism is not, on the whole, a term of choice amongst modern day historians of the early seventeenth century Church of England. Most prefer to use the words Arminianism or anti-Calvinism when referring to the beliefs of those who challenged the traditional beliefs and practices of the Church of England in the pre-Civil War period. Neither of those terms has been used in this context because they have become inextricably, and sometimes exclusively, associated with a particular set of beliefs on God's grace and man's free will. It is not the intention here, however, to disassociate Laudians from an antipathy towards the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. There can be little doubt that many Laudians opposed the beliefs that Christ died only for the elect and that those not willed by God to eternal salvation were inevitably damned. It was probably a commonplace amongst Laudians, albeit often an implicit one, that Christ died for all mankind and that salvation and reprobation were based only on God's conditional will. However, it is important to stress that those referred to here as Laudians did not necessarily subscribe to anti-predestinarian beliefs. For present purposes, Laudians were simply those who subscribed to certain innovatory ceremonial practices and beliefs which were also closely associated with English Arminians and English Arminianism.

Establishing to which ceremonial practices Laudians adhered is somewhat easier than defining their beliefs. That having been said, the former do, to a certain extent at least, illuminate the latter. More importantly, a small number of Laudians set down their beliefs in writing. From this evidence, a common canon of both beliefs and practices can be established. Laudians believed that God was truly present within the church and that the church itself and every object within the church was sacred and should be revered.¹ It was for this reason that Laudians decorated their churches with, for example, religious pictures and stained glass, and sought to beautify the

¹ A. Reade, *A Sermon Preached*, pp. 1-15; J. Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, pp. 3-19

traditional 'impedimenta of worship',² such as the communion plate. The same reasoning lay behind the elevation of the communion table to a position of new importance in an altarwise position, behind altar rails, at the east end of the church, a location which confirmed its status as the most sacred of all holy objects. A status it held because it was the table from which the Eucharist was given. The Eucharist, through which it was believed God's grace could be diffused to mankind, was the *sine qua non* of worship for Laudians. Indeed for some Laudians sacramental grace assumed the role assigned by Calvinists to the grace of predestination.³ Thus reverence and ceremony on the part of the laity, which Laudians thought to be important at all times during worship, were especially so when the sacrament was being received. So, for Laudians kneeling to receive the communion was not simply an act of obedience to the ecclesiastical authorities, it was also a mark of respect for and submission towards God.⁴

It was not only the sacrament that the Laudians elevated to a new position of importance within the service. Set, public prayer would have played a prominent part in any Laudian act of worship. The elevation of public prayer by the Laudians was reflective of their belief that unified and uniform public worship was essential both as a mark of respect to God and as a more effective way of communicating with God. Despite this emphasis on respect for God, Laudians were not, on the whole, averse to Sunday games, as is shown by the fact that a number endorsed the controversial *Book of Sports*.⁵ As Kenneth Parker has pointed out, it does not necessarily follow from this that all Laudians were anti-sabbatarians.⁶ Nevertheless, the stance of Laudians *vis a vis* the *Book of Sports* is important because it tended to set them apart from many of the clergymen within the Church of England. Views on preaching also

² P. Lake, 'The Laudian Style' in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 166

³ N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 7

⁴ For evidence that Laudians insisted that communicants kneel at the altar rails see Matthews, pp. 147, 148, 153, 157, 159, 163, 167, 168; White, pp. 1, 3, 5, 6, 15, 21, 36, 48, 98

⁵ At least 16 ministers in Essex read the *Book of Sports*, justified the *Book of Sports* and/or played games on Sundays. Matthews, pp. 149, 151, 153, 155, 157, 162, 163, 165; White, pp. 1, 3, 15, 19, 21, 29, 36, 37

⁶ K. Parker, *The English Sabbath*, (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 178-219, quotations from p. 180

formed a barrier between Laudians and many of their fellow clergymen. Laudians are often thought to have placed a decreased emphasis on preaching. This is not incorrect, but it must be remembered both that Laudians were not opposed to preaching *per se* and that many Laudians preached regularly. They had reservations only about the Puritan belief that faith and salvation were nothing without preaching, arguing instead that the role of preacher was to teach, instruct and bring the congregation to prayer and the sacraments.⁷

Laudianism takes its name from Archbishop William Laud, who held the see of Canterbury from 1633 until 1645, but the historian should be wary of assuming that his ideas and actions alone characterise Laudianism. Laud's name is not just a convenient label but he probably had no more impact on the movement than Richard Montagu or Richard Neile and arguably Laud was not as 'Laudian' as, for example, Matthew Wren. While all the aforementioned men were active in the church before the 1630s, it would be a mistake to speak of Laudianism before this time for many of the innovatory changes which together comprise Laudianism were not formally introduced until after Laud became archbishop of Canterbury. It should be pointed out too that the impact of Laudianism on the Church of England was felt most strongly only after the railing in of the communion tables, a change not introduced until the mid to late 1630s.

The existence of Laudianism as a new and distinct set of ideas and policies is not, of course, undisputed. Peter White argues that Laudianism 'had its origins deep in Elizabeth's reign' and adds that: 'It was not so much the novelty of the policy but its vigour that distinguishes the 1630s'.⁸ White is correct to assert that the Laudian changes were rigorously implemented but he fails to notice that Laud enforced a policy which ensured the alteration of the internal appearance of churches. His insistence upon all communion tables being set altarwise and railed in at the east end

⁷ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 202, 225; Lake 'The Laudian Style', pp. 169-170, Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp. 231-240

⁸ P. White, 'The *Via Media* in the Early Stuart Church', in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, pp. 228-229

of the church was without precedent in the Church of England, as was his urging of adherence to the innovatory ceremonial practices and beliefs. In his enforcement of these policies Laud had the support of most of the episcopal bench but the policy was certainly not uncontroversial within the church as a whole. The Laudian bishops demanded obedience, not simply to long established statutes and canons but also to innovatory policies. Inevitably, their uncompromising stance generated hostility towards Laudianism but it also won them supporters both among the ordinary clergy and among the laity. In this chapter the beliefs of a supporter of Laudianism, Richard Drake, rector of Radwinter in Essex, will be explored in detail.

It is nearly eighty years since Harold Smith noted with regret the lack of an entry for Richard Drake in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Time has not yet rectified the fault.⁹ Furthermore, no historian since Smith has shown any more than a passing interest in the clergyman and scholar. This despite the fact that Drake not only translated into English from Latin and edited two works by Lancelot Andrewes but also left a Latin autobiography covering the first forty-nine years of his life. In his *Ecclesiastical History of Essex*, Smith provided an outline of the contents of the autobiography and reproduced in full the section in English at the end of the manuscript but neither he nor any one else has attempted a detailed analysis of Drake's life, his influences and his beliefs. Yet all three are worthy of closer examination for they enable the historian better to understand both the Laudian movement and Laudianism as a creed.

The autobiography was written in the form of an intermittently kept diary and might be mistaken for such were not the first entry for Drake's birth on April 21st 1609.¹⁰ Having recorded this event, Drake gave a few details about his education. He was schooled at Epping in Essex before entering Pembroke Hall, Cambridge on June 24th 1624, at which time, as Drake noted, Eleazor Duncon was a fellow and a tutor at the college. Drake was Greek Scholar at Pembroke, gaining his BA in 1627 and his

⁹ Richard Drake will, however, appear in the new version of the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 3r

MA in 1631, the same year in which the members of the college elected him to a fellowship. Shortly before Drake became a fellow at Pembroke his 'patron', the 'very distinguished'* Jerome Beale died.¹¹ Beale, who had himself gained his fellowship, his MA and his DD from Pembroke, rose to be master of the college in 1619. As holder of that position, the anti-Calvinist Beale was able not just to campaign on behalf of but, more importantly, to vote for the Duke of Buckingham to become Chancellor of the University in 1626.¹² Beale was succeeded as Master of Pembroke Hall by Benjamin Laney. The latter was responsible for reinstating the choral service at Pembroke and for beautifying the communion table in the college chapel. Beyond the University, Laney served as chaplain to both Richard Neile and Charles I.¹³ All of which indicates that his religious position was not far removed from that of Beale. However, there is no evidence that Drake admired Laney as he did his patron, although Drake's decision to record Laney's elevation may in itself be significant, especially as he noted too Laney's appointment in 1632 to the position of Vice Chancellor at Cambridge.¹⁴

The years immediately following Laney's promotion seem to have been quiet ones for Richard Drake, the next important event occurring on June 1st 1634. On that date, Drake was ordained a deacon by Francis White, who was at that time Bishop of Ely and therefore responsible for carrying out all ordinations in Cambridge.¹⁵ Francis White was a controversial figure, for it was he who licensed for publication Richard Montagu's overtly anti-Calvinist tract of 1625, *Appello Caesarem*. More interesting perhaps, is the memorandum White wrote to Lancelot Andrewes in which he explained why he had licensed *Appello Caesarem*. This defence of Montagu had in effect been written at the request of James I and has been described as 'ambiguous' but there can be little doubt that White's sympathies were with Montagu's thesis, for

¹¹ *ibid.*, f. 4v

¹² *DNB sub* Beale, Jerome: Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 48-50

¹³ *DNB sub* Laney, Benjamin: BL Harleian MS 7019, f. 81r

¹⁴ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4v

¹⁵ *ibid.*, f. 4r

he expressed anti-Calvinist views at the York House Conference of 1626. On that occasion, White asserted that St. Paul was not 'justified' before his conversion and disputed against the denial that Christ died for all.¹⁶ In short, White, for all his caution, was a supporter of anti-Calvinism long before he ordained Richard Drake.

White's ordination of Drake occurred in the same year as Matthew Wren's translation from the Deanery of Windsor to the see of Hereford, an event which was recorded by Drake as occurring on December 4th 1634.¹⁷ Wren, another Pembroke alumnus and an ex-pupil of Jerome Beale, must have been at very least an acquaintance of Drake's, for the autobiographer did not routinely record episcopal appointments. As the man who enquired in his visitation articles if the communion table was 'ordinarily ... at the east end of the chancel, where the altar in former times stood, the end[s] thereof being placed north and south?', Wren was certainly typical of those with whom Drake surrounded himself.¹⁸ So too was Eleazor Duncon, whom Drake visited in Durham on July 20th 1635, the former having acquired the rectorship of Haughton-le-Skern in Durham two years earlier.¹⁹ Duncon, who had served as chaplain to Richard Neile, believed that good works were necessary for salvation and wrote a treatise justifying the practise of bowing towards the altar.²⁰

Exactly five months after his visit to Duncon, Drake was ordained as a priest by Francis White. Aside from being granted the right to preach in the diocese of Norwich by Matthew Wren his ordination brought about no immediate change in his life. Indeed, Drake's next three years were mostly spent as his previous nine had been, at Cambridge. According to his autobiography, he left the town only once, in November 1636. He chose to absent himself on that occasion because there was plague in the town. Drake and his friend William Hervey took refuge at the latter's family home, Ickworth in Suffolk. No indication is given of the length of the stay but

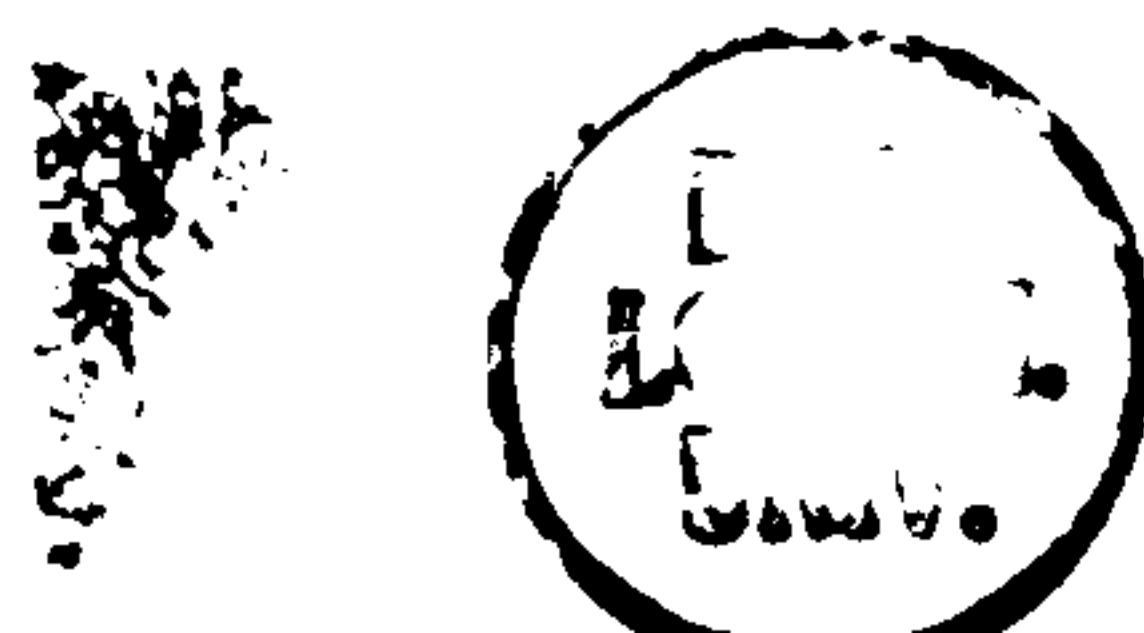
¹⁶ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 44, 108, 151, 174-176

¹⁷ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4r. The *Dictionary of National Biography* gives December 5th 1634 as the date of Wren's promotion.

¹⁸ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 205; *DNB sub.* Wren, Matthew

¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4r; Venn, Part 1, Volume II, p. 74

²⁰ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 54; E. Duncon, *De Adoratione Dei Versus Altare*, (London, 1660)



certainly Drake was back in Cambridge by July 8th 1637. the day on which he was elected a Taxor.²¹ After recording the date of his first admission to the Senate, October 10th 1636, Drake wrote no more about the University of Cambridge.²² His next two entries are, respectively, a note of the death of William Hervey's wife, on February 7th 1636 and a record of the translation of Matthew Wren from Norwich to Ely, which he dates to March 20th 1637.²³ Wren's new appointment brought for Drake, on September 25th 1638, a license to preach in the diocese of Ely but by that time he had more important concerns, as on September 9th he was presented to his first benefice, Radwinter in Essex, the living of which was within the gift of his father, the wealthy London mercer, Roger Drake.²⁴ Radwinter had become vacant following the death of John Mountford, the previous incumbent. Mountford's widow was one of the lay nonconformists in Radwinter who opposed Drake and it is possible, but not certain, that her husband had shared her inclinations.²⁵ All the administrative business surrounding Drake's appointment to Radwinter is described in detail in the autobiography. On October 19th he received the 'letters of attestation concerning [his] status and condition [as a graduate] from the office of the vice-chancellor [of Cambridge], Ralph Brownrigg'.²⁶ Further letters of attestation arrived on November 28th; these were from Arthur Duck, chancellor of the diocese of London. They proved that Drake had subscribed to the '[thirty-nine] articles of religion'* and granted him leave to preach in the diocese of London. The formalities were concluded on December 1st with Drake gaining from Robert Aylett, an official

²¹ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4v. William Hervey was the younger brother of John Hervey, 1618-1680, for whom there is an entry in the Dictionary of National Biography. Little is known about William Hervey aside from the fact that his death at Cambridge in 1642 inspired his friend, the poet Abraham Cowley, to compose a long but unimpressive elegy. R. Halsband, *Lord Hervey: Eighteenth Century Courtier*, (Oxford, 1973); *DNB sub* Cowley, Abraham.

²² Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4v. Drake notes that he was admitted to the Senate at the same time as the Puritan divine Henry Hutton, whom he describes as 'very faithful and very friendly to my brother'.*

²³ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4v. Other sources date Wren's move to April 1638. *DNB sub*, Wren, Matthew.

²⁴ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 5v

²⁵ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 44v

²⁶ This is the first occasion on which Drake mention the Calvinist Ralph Brownrigg, although both were at Pembroke between 1624 and 1626. *DNB sub* Brownrigg, Ralph.

in the Archdeaconry of Colchester. the order ‘to be conducted into the said rectory’.*²⁷ The order having been received, Drake’s ministry, and thus his troubles, began. During the next few years Richard Drake faced almost constant opposition from a small but vociferous minority of his parishioners. Their wrath was aroused initially by the work he undertook on the chancel of Radwinter church. Drake raised the chancel floor and added a new rood screen decorated with images of cherabim. The Puritans amongst Drake’s parishioners considered the work on the chancel floor unnecessary and the rood screen idolatrous. Nor did they like their clergyman bowing at the altar table, reading the service with his back to the congregation, wearing a surplice with the figure of the cross upon it and refusing to administer the sacrament except at the altar rail, to name just a few of their objections.²⁸ Their opposition to Drake culminated in his being brought before the Grand Committee on Religion in February 1641 and condemned for his practices.²⁹

Drake’s first curate, Augustine Rolfe, was also a victim of the group of Puritan nonconformists who clashed with Drake; consequently he left the parish on June 24th 1641. The exact reasons for the unpopularity of Rolfe, a graduate of Queen’s College, Cambridge, are not outlined in the diary. Presumably, he was trying to enforce obedience to pre-Laudian ceremonies and Laudianism within Radwinter, although it is difficult to prove that his attachment to either was strong for he accepted the position of vicar of Stanstead Abbots in Hertfordshire in 1644 by which time all ceremony and ritual had been officially abolished.³⁰ Rolfe’s replacement as Drake’s curate, William Shepherd, stayed in Radwinter less than a year, leaving in the summer of 1642 to work with Christopher Wren, the Laudian dean of Windsor.³¹ The third curate employed at Radwinter, the Norwich born, Gonville and Caius graduate Thomas Garnham, took up residence in the parish in 1642. Drake seems to have had

²⁷ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 4v

²⁸ *ibid.* ff. 46v-52v. For more details of the difficulties encountered by Drake see chapter 5: Lay Attitudes to Conformity and Laudianism in Essex.

²⁹ *ibid.* f. 6v; Matthews, p. 150

³⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 7r; Venn, Part 1, Volume III, p. 482

³¹ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 7r; Matthews, p. 382

a closer relationship with Garnham than with either Rolfe or Shepherd, for he wrote of him as ‘sensible and honest’ and described him as a ‘friend’.³² Garnham, like his predecessor Rolfe, incurred the wrath of Puritan nonconformists in the village. For example, on February 12th 1643 they tried to prevent Garnham either from preaching or from reading prayers, first by refusing him admission to the church and then by hiding the Book of Common Prayer. The following week they simply locked and refused altogether to open the church doors.³³ Garnham had to contend with these difficulties alone because in January 1642 Drake left Radwinter for London.³⁴

The move did not signal an end to Drake’s problems. In August 1643 he was accused of malignancy and spent a short period incarcerated in Petre House, Aldersgate.³⁵ Then, at the end of October 1643, only a month after his release, Drake was ordered to appear before the Committee for Plundered Ministers to face new charges from his erstwhile parishioners at Radwinter. None of Drake’s opponents attended the meeting but the clergyman was still required to answer their complaints, something he did at length. This task having been completed, Drake turned his attention to attempting to have his sequestration from Radwinter reversed. His attempt was not successful but as a result of the intervention of his brother, the Puritan divine and physician Roger Drake, the earl of Manchester agreed on April 16th 1644 that Richard Drake could keep ‘his books and other goods’.³⁶ Drake had only a short time to appreciate this gesture because he was soon imprisoned for a second time. His offence on this occasion was hindering, in the course of their duty, the three constables whose job it was to ensure that Drake’s manservant joined the army. The clergyman did not regain his liberty until November 30th 1644.

The autobiography gives no information about Drake’s life during the following two months but the execution on January 20th 1645 of ‘the very reverend

³² Venn, Part 1, Volume III, p. 196; Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 8v

³³ *ibid*, ff. 49v

³⁴ *ibid*, 7r

³⁵ No records from the Petre House, Aldersgate survive

³⁶ *ibid*, 10v

father in God, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury’* is noted. Laud, Drake wrote, was accused of ‘having violated I do not know what laws and having introduced, so they say, superstition and tyranny’.* Drake rejected the charges and, more importantly, praised Laud for having ‘defended, strengthened and fought for the true, ancient, catholic religion of England ... by his words, by his actions, by his prayers [and] by his example’.* He added that the execution was unlawful for it was passed, ‘in the new and unheard of ’* manner, i.e. without the consent of the King.³⁷

Injustice was at the forefront of Drake’s mind again in the month following Laud’s execution. At that time, the Committee for Assessments ordered Drake to pay £150 towards the costs of the war against the King or else face imprisonment. Drake claimed that he could not provide any contribution on the grounds that his income and assets came to less than forty shillings; his excuse was not accepted and he returned to prison mocking the notion that Parliament believed in ‘the freedom of the subject’.³⁸ It is not clear from the manuscript how long Drake remained in custody but he must have been free by September 21st 1646 for on that date he took a trip to Radwinter. His journey was all but wasted as he explained in a letter he wrote to his ‘dearly beloved neighbours, the parishioners of the church of Radwinter ... After almost four years absense, or rather forced detention from you, I came down, by ye divine protection, into these quarters, with all hearty affection, and a most honest desire to see you. For wh[i]ch purpose, I went on Friday last into Radwinter; but to my no small grief, though I called at many of your houses, yet I saw very few or none of you.’³⁹

Ten days after his ill-fated visit to Radwinter, Drake was mourning another death, that of his ‘friend’* and fellow Laudian John Browning.⁴⁰ Educated at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, Browning had by 1625 gained his first living in Essex, Rawreth. It was as rector of that parish that Browning led the campaign in

³⁷ *ibid*, 10r

³⁸ *ibid*, 11r

³⁹ *ibid*, 11r

⁴⁰ *ibid*, 12v

Essex against the Puritan nonconformist lecturer, Thomas Hooker. On November 3rd 1629 Browning wrote to William Laud, who was then Bishop of London, asking him at least to defend ‘us who live in obedience’ and preferably to ‘cast out and suppress’ Hooker.⁴¹ Laud seems to have begun to act in accordance with Browning’s wishes: certainly he provoked 49 of Hooker’s supporters in Essex into signing a petition claiming that the lecturer was neither ‘turbulent’ nor ‘factious’. In response to this, Browning, with the support of 41 clergy, produced a counter petition requesting that Laud force ‘irregulars to conform’.⁴² Drake, not being in 1629 beneficed at Radwinter, did not sign Browning’s petition. Indeed, it is by no means certain that he knew Browning at that point for the latter is mentioned in the autobiography only upon his death. For the same reason, it is not possible to comment upon the nature of the relationship shared by the two clergymen. What is known is that they had much in common. Aside from both being Essex Laudians sequestered of their livings in the 1640s, each had a connection with Lancelot Andrewes. Browning had, early in his career, worked as one of Andrewes’ chaplains; Drake was translator and editor of three of Andrewes’ best known publications. Their links with Lancelot Andrewes may have been more than coincidental for it is surely possible that Drake was given Andrewes’ manuscripts by Browning. Unfortunately, Drake’s only comment on his receipt of the writings of the erstwhile Bishop of Winchester was that they had been given to him by Andrewes’ ‘amanuensis’. It is generally thought that this is a reference to Henry Isaacson, but as Isaacson is never mentioned in the diary his involvement is far from certain. Browning, on the other hand, was definitely close to Drake and could have been in possession of manuscripts by Andrewes. In addition, as he notes in his autobiography, Drake started translating and editing the first of Andrewes’ works, *Private Devotions*, in 1647, only shortly after Browning’s death.⁴³

⁴¹ PRO SP 16/151, f. 19r-20v

⁴² PRO SP 16/151, f. 65v-r, SP 16/152, f. 4v-r

⁴³ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 12v, *DNB sub* Andrewes, Lancelot, L. Andrewes. *Private Devotions and Meditations*. (London, 1648), p. A7v

1647 was also the year in which Drake saw King Charles I for the final time. He wrote of that day, August 24th 1647: ‘On the feast of St. Batholomew the Apostle. I saw the most serene King for the last time at Oatlands. Alas! Having kissed his hand with appropriate reverence, I gave, dedicated and consecrated [to him], willingly and deservedly and upon my knees three tracts in English by the very reverend Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester [which had been] entrusted to my care [and are] very necessary for extinguishing the growing evils of the church’.*⁴⁴ Drake did not list the titles of the books he presented to the King but it is unlikely that they were the same three tracts Drake edited not so much because none was dedicated to Charles I but rather because there is no evidence that any of them were complete by August 1647. Indeed, the fact that Drake did not send his editions of the *Private Devotions* and the *Manual of Devotions for the Sick* to the publisher until 21st April 1648 suggests that he did not finish them until shortly before that date. About the third book, a collection of prayers for holy communion, which was later appended to the *Manual of Devotions for the Sick*, Drake was more specific. He states clearly that he translated these prayers from Greek into English on 24th June 1648.⁴⁵

Drake was very proud of his achievements with Andrewes’ work. He did not however, confine himself to his studies; at sometime between 1649 and 1651 he became involved in political intrigue. Specifically, he, along with his brother and his father, was party to the plot of Christopher Love, the final aim of which was to reinstate the Stuart monarchy in England. Christopher Love was a Puritan minister who served at both St. Ann’s Aldersgate and St. Lawrence Jewry during the 1640s. Neither ministry was a peaceful one for Love, like Richard Drake’s brother, Roger Drake, was a presbyterian and as such incurred the wrath of the independent faction. However, Love’s real troubles did not start until 1651, the year in which he was indicted for plotting to restore the Stuart monarchy in England. The charges against

⁴⁴ *ibid*, 12v. The use of the words ‘I saw the ... King for the last time’ imply that Drake had met him before, but no other meetings are recorded in the autobiography.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, 12v, *Private Devotions* is dedicated to the Prince of Wales. There is no dedication in *Manual of Devotions for the Sick*.

Love, to most of which he admitted, were that he had been exchanging letters with Henrietta Maria, Charles II and Scottish presbyterians happy to see the return of the Stuart monarchy. Love did not describe Drake's role in the plot and the autobiographer gave no details as to the nature or extent of his involvement in the intrigue. He said only that he was arrested for his part in Love's plot on May 2nd 1651 and placed in the care of the Serjeant at Arms but that at the cost of £400 he obtained his freedom before the month was over.⁴⁶

Drake seems to have steered clear of politics after his release from custody. He may have spent a little time in Suffolk in 1652 for he recorded that his friend, John Duncon, the brother of Eleazor, died on October 6th at the house of Sir John Pettus, Cheston Hall in Suffolk. John Duncon held the parish of Rettenhall in Essex from 1641 to 1647, but is best known as chaplain to Matthew Wren, bishop of Norwich. His notoriety arises from the fact that his Laudianism was described in some detail in the articles against Wren. 'Mr. Duncon', it was said 'deni[ed] such as came not to the raile, the receiving of the communion ... [made] frequent adorations to and towards the table or altar ... was not afraid to maintaine that ther was a holines in the communion table' and made 'superstitious actions and gestures'.⁴⁷

Although Drake noted the death of John Duncon in 1652, he said nothing about his own activities that year; yet he must have been extremely busy, for that was the year in which Brian Walton's Polyglot Bible, to which Drake was a contributor, was published.⁴⁸ Prior to the Civil War, Walton had been beneficed at Sandon in Essex and at St. Martin's Orgar, London. He lost both his livings in 1642, in part because he had been 'active' in moving the communion table to the east end of the church from where he had obliged his parishioners to receive the sacrament.⁴⁹

Walton and Drake may have become acquainted whilst both were beneficed in Essex

⁴⁶ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 15v-r; Dr. Williams Library, Quick's MSS, 38.34, pp. 291-292; *DNB sub* Love, Christopher; *DNB sub* Drake, Roger.

⁴⁷ D'ewes, *Journal*, p. 298

⁴⁸ *A Brief Description of an edition of the Bible in the Original Hebrew, Samaritan and Greek, with the Most Ancient Translations of the Jewish and Christian Churches*, (London, 1652), p. 3

⁴⁹ *The Articles and Charge Proved in Parliament Against Dr. Walton*, pp. 1-12, Matthews, p. 61

or met only after 1645, the year in which Walton began work on the Polyglot Bible.⁵⁰ It is not possible to be certain about dates, though, because Drake never mentioned either his acquaintance with Walton or his work on the Polyglot Bible in his autobiography.

His brief courtship and subsequent marriage to Jane Lambert, whom he met in April 1654 and wedded a month later, are, on the other hand, accorded a relatively large amount of space in the manuscript. Jane, the widow of clergyman Edward Lambert, was introduced to Drake on 11th April 1654 by another minister, Matthew Smallwood, when all three were guests of John Sanders.⁵¹ Drake and Mrs. Lambert met again two days later, this time at the house of her brother, John Tufton, whom Drake describes as a ‘merchant’. It was on this occasion that Drake proposed marriage but not until 15th April 1654 that Jane accepted his offer. The marriage ceremony itself took place on 29th May and seems to have been a lengthy affair. The couple were joined first before the Lord Mayor of London and then by their mutual friend Matthew Smallwood at St. Martin Outwich. The first ceremony, at which Jane’s brother Ralph Tufton, a doctor of medicine, George Joyliffe, the famous Royalist medic and discoverer of lymph ducts and the lawyer Antony Hinton were witnesses, was, for Drake, no more than a formality; the second celebration he considered to be the important one: ‘Matthew, the service being conducted according to the rites of the church, joined us more strongly and more happily together ... and then by the very sacred mystery of the Lord’s body and blood everything [was] finished and perfected’.⁵² Perhaps, Matthew Smallwood was chosen to conduct the service not so much because it was he who had introduced Drake to his wife but rather because he shared Drake’s religious and theological outlook but there is no concrete evidence of his Laudianism. Smallwood had obtained his bachelor’s degree

⁵⁰ *DNB sub* Walton, Brian

⁵¹ Edward Lambert is an elusive figure but he may be the individual who matriculated from St. Catherine’s College, Oxford in 1629 and gained his BA from the same college in 1632. Of John Sanders nothing can be discovered.

⁵² Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, ff. 17v-r, 18v. Anthony Hinton was the son of the Anthony Hinton who was knighted at Oatlands on July 4th 1620. Foster, *Early Series*, p. 718

from Brasenose College, Oxford in 1634 and became rector of St. Martin Outwich shortly afterwards. He stayed at Outwich until 1660, in which year he was appointed chaplain to Charles II and canon of St. Paul's. By 1671, he had risen to the position of dean of Lichfield, where he stayed until his death in 1683.⁵³

After their wedding Drake and his wife settled in Richmond. They were probably very comfortable financially for, although there is no evidence that Jane had any sizeable fortune, Richard Drake's father had died in 1651, leaving a substantial amount of money and property to his son.⁵⁴ More important, from Drake's point of view seems to have been the fact that the marriage was fruitful for he devoted a lot of space to news of his children. All of the Drakes' children were born and baptised in Richmond, where the newly weds had moved in October 1654.⁵⁵ In that town Drake met and became friends with Brian Duppa, another Laudian who had had his living sequestered from him by Parliament.⁵⁶ Under Charles I, Duppa had risen to the position of Bishop of Salisbury, by which title Drake still, of course, referred to him in the 1650s. Duppa was one of the most overtly Laudian bishops as he demonstrated in his visitation articles which enquired if: 'the communion table or altar [is] set according to the practise of the ancient church, upon an ascent at the east end of the chancell, with the ends of it north and south'.⁵⁷ The heightened view of the sacraments demonstrated by the desire to have the communion table so positioned is apparent too in Duppa's publications. In *Angels Rejoicing for Sinners Repenting*, for example, he wrote that through baptism God washes the receiver as 'clean as the untouched snow', whilst in *A Guide for the Penitent* he urged his readers to take communion as frequently as possible for: 'the oftener you apply yourself to it the purer [will be] your heart and the better armed [you will be] against temptations'.⁵⁸ In

⁵³ Foster, *Early Series*, p. 1367; Newcourt, *Repertorium*, p. 420

⁵⁴ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 15v; FRC Prob 11/221/55, f. 37v-r, 38v

⁵⁵ *ibid*, 18v

⁵⁶ *ibid*

⁵⁷ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 206

⁵⁸ B. Duppa, *Angels Rejoicing for Sinners Repenting*, (London, 1648), p. 12; B. Duppa, *A Guide for the Penitent*, (London, 1667), p. 8

addition to these beliefs, Duppa was a staunch defender of set prayer.⁵⁹ It was presumably because Drake shared these views that he had his 12 year old stepdaughter ‘confirmed’* by Duppa in May 1655 and then appointed the ex-bishop godfather to his first son in 1657.⁶⁰

Drake chronicled nothing after February 1658. So, of his life after that time only a small amount is known. He was reinstated as rector of Radwinter in 1662, resigned the benefice in 1667 and moved to Salisbury where he had been chancellor since 1663. In the same year, Drake accepted the rectorship of Wyke Regis in Dorset. He was still chancellor of the Cathedral and rector of Wyke Regis upon his death in 1681.⁶¹ In his will, dated October 5th 1681, Drake left money to the poor in Salisbury and Wyke Regis and bequeathed to ‘the master, fellows and scholars of Pembroke ... such of my bookes in folio and quarto as I have not otherwise disposed of and that are not alreadie in the librarie. Also I give them Bishop Andrewes effigies in quarto to be put either in the said librarie or the master’s lodging’.⁶² The ‘effigies’ of which Drake wrote were presumably the originals of the engravings that appear in the front of the versions of *Private Devotions* and *Manual of Devotions for the Sick* edited by Drake. Both books contain a portrait of Bishop Andrewes and below it the following verse:

‘If ever any merited to be

The universall bishop, this was he

Great Andrewes who ye whole vast sea did drain

Of learning, and distill’d it in his brain;

These pious dropps are of the purest kind

Which trickled from the limbeck of his mind.’ In the *Manual of Devotions for the Sick* there are two further engravings: one of Andrewes kneeling at the doorway of

⁵⁹ B. Duppa, *Private Forms of Prayers Fit for These Sad Times*, (Oxford, 1645), *passim*

⁶⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, ff. 18r, 19r

⁶¹ Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 191; Venn. Part 1, Volume 1, p. 64

⁶² FRC Prob 11/368/161, f. 159r. The librarian of Pembroke College has no knowledge of the ‘effigies’ of Andrewes left to Pembroke by Richard Drake. The books left to Pembroke by Drake include works by Thomas Aquinas, Brian Walton and William Alverni.

an empty room and one of Andrewes and another man standing by the bedside of a sick or dying man.⁶³

The engravings are an interesting element of Drake's material legacy but of greater importance is his written legacy. This consists only of his will, his autobiography and the introductions he wrote to the *Private Devotions* and the *Manual of Devotions for the Sick*; he produced no books of his own and none of his sermons survive. Yet it is possible to discuss his beliefs in some detail because he provided in his autobiography the answers he made to the charges brought against him in the 1640s. The relatively substantial amount of information contained in these answers can be supplemented by a small number of illuminating passages to be found elsewhere in Drake's writings. One question, however, is not directly addressed anywhere; Drake never provided a definitive statement of theology. A couple of clues as to his theological leanings are, though, worthy of attention. The first of these is the preamble to his will. The use of preambles as evidence for religious beliefs is controversial, so a justification for doing so in this case is required. The most important criticism made of preambles is that they tend to be formulaic and can therefore obscure or misrepresent a person's true convictions.⁶⁴ It is true that the standard phrases regularly used in wills are not revealing and that occasionally they seem to contradict or gloss over beliefs elucidated in other sources. Drake, a literate, educated man, wrote his own will; he did not simply employ a scribe to insert whatever expressions of piety he saw fit. Furthermore, Drake was a clergyman with extremely strong views on religion and a person who thought much about the way in which his trust in and love and respect for God should be expressed. He would have been fully aware of the implications and significance of his words. For that reason the preamble to Drake's will merits careful examination. In that document the 'unworthy' Chancellor of St. Mary's, Salisbury, following almost word for word a

⁶³ The verse is attributed to James Howell.

⁶⁴ J. Alsop, 'Religious Preambles in Early Modern English Wills as Formulae', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Volume 40, (1989), pp. 19-27

passage in Lancelot Andrewes' will. wrote: 'First and above all things, with all due humilitie and in most devout manner I yield up into the hands of Almightye God that which he hath created, redeemed, regenerated (that is) my soul and bodie, most humbly beseeching him to make me (though a most wretched synner) partaker of the mercies of the father, and through the merits of the sonn of the forgiveness of my sins, and of all the comforts of the holy spirit pertayning to the covenant made with mankinde in the death of his sonn. Whomsoever I have offended any wayes I do on my knees desire to be forgiven by them and who have any ways offended me I freely and fully forgive them as I pray to have my own synnes (which are many and grievous) forgiven me at the hands of God'.⁶⁵ What this statement demonstrates above all things is that Drake lacked the confidence so often displayed by those who counted themselves amongst the predestined elect. This is shown by the fact that he did not 'trust' or 'believe' in his salvation but rather begged God to forgive his sins and save him. If Drake had believed in unconditional predestination he would surely have thought such appeals futile and therefore not made them. Of what Drake positively believed, as opposed to what he did not believe, the preamble reveals little. Drake's reference to the 'covenant made with mankind' cannot alone be taken as evidence that he believed that Christ's death could be effective for all and the passage contains no other suggestive words or phrases.

There is extant in the autobiography, though, an equally tantalising piece by Drake. The extract, which was quoted by Drake at his trial before the Grand Committee on Religion, was part of a funeral sermon delivered by Drake upon the death of Martha Wale, one of his parishioners at Radwinter. On that occasion Drake declared to his congregation: 'You have good cause to hope that as she is now herself in heaven, so by her praier, (for we believe in the communion of saints and that ye saints departed praie for us as we praise God for them), she is able to do you more good now than when she was upon earth', for, Drake explained to the Grand

⁶⁵ *The Works of Lancelot Andrewes*. Volume XI. (Oxford, 1854). p. C; FRC Prob 11/368 161, f. 158r

Committee, ‘doth it not stand within reason that charitie being perfected in heaven. ye saints should exercise this most excellent and proper act thereof by prayer for their fellow members here on earth? Nor can the invocation of saints in the Church of Rome have any ground or colour from this their intercession for us. For the saints know in general that we are miserable, but they cannot know our particular wants, nor ... can they hear our prayers’.⁶⁶ An understanding of this passage is complicated by Drake’s failure to define the phrase ‘fellow members ... on earth’. However, that he used it in apposition to a reference to the saints in heaven suggests that he was speaking of some kind of elect. Unfortunately, he does not specify the nature of their election nor explain how they would benefit from the prayers of their counterparts in heaven. Could he have meant simply that the saints in heaven were best placed to bring the unconditionally elect on earth closer to God? Surely not, for why would such intercession be necessary for those already destined to eternal glory and why would heavenly entreaties be more likely to achieve this end than earthly ones made by the individuals concerned? It is far more probable that Drake meant that intercession in heaven could prove efficacious in helping to ensure the salvation of the conditionally elect or he may simply have been referring to saintly intercessions for sinful mankind.

The passages quoted above are the only surviving statements by Drake that touch on the nature of salvation, and the theology that lay behind them can be only cautiously inferred. However, the people with whom Drake surrounded himself offer another clue as to his theological leanings. This is not to say that Drake necessarily shared the beliefs of all his friends and acquaintances. Obviously this is not the case for he numbered amongst those close to him Puritans such as his brother, Roger Drake, and Christopher Love as well as anti-Calvinists. It seems unlikely to be a coincidence though that he admired and befriended so many of the latter. Three of the four men from Pembroke whom Drake mentioned by name: Jerome Beale, Benjamin

⁶⁶ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 47r

Laney and Eleazor Duncon were anti-Calvinists, as was Matthew Wren, who ensured that Drake had the right to preach in both Norwich and Ely. John Browning, who, aside from John Duncon, was alone of Drake's fellow incumbents in Essex not just in being described as a friend but for appearing in the autobiography at all, revealed his anti-Calvinism in sermons published in 1636.⁶⁷ The 'holy prelate', whom Drake so admired, the 'glorious' Bishop Lancelot Andrewes, did not begin his career as an anti-Calvinist but had certainly adopted that position by the 1590s. Drake may have translated and edited just two of Andrewes' works but he wrote of his 'incomparable sermons and discourses [which] ... enrich the world with piety and learning' which suggests that he was well acquainted with the entire oeuvre of the cleric. That he shared the theological position held by Andrewes for the final 30 years of his life cannot therefore be inconceivable.⁶⁸ The Archbishop for whom Drake expressed such great admiration, William Laud, was an anti-Calvinist too. Admittedly, though, if Drake had ever heard Laud preach or read any of his works he did not record the fact in his diary so it is possible that Drake was not aware of the theological stance taken by Laud.⁶⁹ It is more likely that Drake was conversant with the theology expoused by his friend Brian Duppa. The latter made clear his antipathy towards Calvinism in two books published in 1648. In *The Soul's Soliloquy* he reassured his readers: '[God] is not such an one, as by any absolute, peremptory decree hath either designed, or ordered, or sealed your damnation before hand, nor such an one that necessitates any of you to perdition: but as that communicable, diffuse good, that hath so often been proclaimed, he would have all men saved'.⁷⁰ Duppa expressed similar sentiments in *Angels Rejoicing for Sinners Repenting*: 'Should there want one string to the lute, the music would not be full, or one link to the chain, the chain would be imperfect, or one regenerate soul to the number of the elect, heaven would not be satisfied: why then

⁶⁷ J. Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, pp. 164-5

⁶⁸ R. Drake's introductions to Andrewes, *Private Devotions*, p. A4v and *Manual of Devotions for the Sick* (London, 1648), p. A2; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 20, 45, 103, 269

⁶⁹ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 70-71

⁷⁰ B. Duppa, *The Soul's Soliloquy and a Conference With Conscience* (London, 1648), p. 20

does every one of us not strive to make up that number?’⁷¹ Important as it undoubtedly was, anti-Calvinism cannot alone be used to characterise Duppa’s beliefs, for as has already been shown, Laudianism was also a significant part of his creed. Indeed all the men mentioned immediately above were Laudians or Laudians *avant la lettre* as well as anti-Calvinists and it may have been their Laudianism alone that Drake shared. That caution having been introduced, the possibility that Drake chose to identify himself with several of the most prominent anti-Calvinists because he did not believe in unconditional predestination should, especially in view of the other available evidence, be seriously considered.

Fortunately, Drake’s failure to articulate his theological position was uncharacteristic; most of his beliefs, preferences and practices are described in some detail. About Drake’s attitude to the beautifying of church interiors there can, for example, be no doubt. As he was to admit before the Grand Committee on Religion in February 1641, Drake had made two alterations intended to improve the ‘comeliness’ of St. Mary the Virgin, Radwinter. First he had ‘erected’ a new rood screen. He described the screen as ‘a tribute to [his] devotion and thankfulness to God’ and added that it was ‘plain, without painting ... whereupon for a suitable ornament to such a place were carved 2 figures of cherubims’ faces, on each side, with these letters STS STS STS DNS IHS XRS, engraved in the wood, and rays of glory about the several words’.⁷² The letters on the rood screen represent the sentence *sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, dominus Jesus Christus* [Holy, holy, holy, our Lord Jesus Chr’st].⁷³ The second change, or more precisely set of changes, made by Drake were to the chancel. As one of his parishioners explained he ‘raised the floor of the chancel much higher than he found it, making 3 steps to the communion table, and ... quite stopped the door out of the churchyard into the chancel with lime and stone’. Drake, condemning those who did not approve the adjustments and denying the

⁷¹ Duppa, *Angels Rejoicing*, p. 19

⁷² Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, ff. 51v, 46r

⁷³ I am grateful to Simon Knott for unravelling the meaning of the letters on the rood screen.

charge of ‘innovation’ in having made them, said ‘I hope God will be pleased to put another estimate upon my service to His house than these unthankfull men have done’.⁷⁴ The justification offered by Drake for the changes was therefore that they would be appreciated by God for they demonstrated love, respect and gratitude. Drake was quick to deny that the pictures on the rood screen were of Jesus, although he at no point said or implied that images of Christ were wrong: ‘how they could possibly be imagined to resemble Christ, I remit to the judgement of all who have not lost their senses’.⁷⁵ That aside, Drake reasoned that as it was lawful to make images so it was unlawful to destroy them. He raged against those who had removed and burnt the rood screen at Radwinter. ‘Thou that abhorrest idols, committest thou sacrilege’. He defended his right to use such strong words on the grounds that he was ‘entrusted with the care of [the iconophobes’] souls’.⁷⁶ On the same theme, Drake ‘comparing the two extremes of religion, sacrilege and superstition ... said that superstition came nearer to virtue than sacrilege doth, as prodigality comes nearer to liberality than covetousness doth [and] by way of dehortation from sacrilege [he] said that the superstitious Papist was better than the sacrilegious atheist. For he gives God his due, but parts with others, saints and angels; but this nor gives his due to God nor yet to others’.⁷⁷

That Drake made such a pronouncement demonstrates that he believed not only in the inherent sanctity of the church and the items contained within it but also in the need to show respect for God by treating the church and the ‘impedimentia of worship’ with care and reverence. Respect should be shown too by a person’s physical demeanour whilst in church as Drake explained in reply to the charges made against him of ‘bowing superstitiously towards the communion table’ and making ‘low obeisance towards’ the sacrament.⁷⁸ Drake stressed in response to both charges

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, f. 51v

⁷⁵ Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, p. 5; Bodleian Library. Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 50v

⁷⁶ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 50r

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, f. 49v

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, f. 46v

that he was not worshipping the items specified but rather God. Worshipping God in this way was, Drake was at pains to point out, entirely in accordance with scripture and tradition: ‘the second commandment, which forbids the external worship of the bodie to be given to an image, commands it to be given to God who is a jealous God. And the constant practise of the mother churches and of persons of the greatest authoritie and pietie is strong enough to free it from innovation or contradiction of the law’. For these reasons Drake believed ‘adoration’ to be a ‘duty and a special part of ... reasonable service to God’.⁷⁹ ‘Christ’, Drake once preached, ‘[is] upon the altar and except we worship him with our bodies, we should never taste any sweetness by him to our souls’. He attempted to give credence to this claim by reference to three of the church fathers: St. Chrysotom, who wrote: ‘Christ is on the altar, but not in presence, but there by way of a sacrament’; St. Augustine, who argued that nobody could eat the flesh of Christ unless they had first adored; and St. Ambrose, of whose words Drake gave the following interpretation: ‘[he] saith we adore Christ’s flesh in the mysteries, that is to say, in the ministration of the mysteries. But’, Drake added by way of explanation, ‘this adoration is not directed to the sacrament nor requireth any corporal or real presence.’⁸⁰ Drake was not the only Laudian to place emphasis on adoration. Six of his fellow Laudians in Essex were condemned in the 1640s for holding the same preference; Edward Cherry was charged with bowing ‘twelve times on entering the chancel’, Erasmus Laud with using ‘superstitious cringing at the altar’, Thomas King with using ‘bowing and cringing to [the altar]’, Edward Shephard with bowing towards the altar rails, Samuel Sowthen with ‘bow[ing] to the elements of the sacrament’ and Stephen Withers with ‘committing altar worship’.⁸¹ Drake’s friend, Eleazor Duncon, favoured the use of adoration too, as he emphasised in his book *De Adoratione Dei Versus Altare*. He explained: ‘the adoration of God performed by the bowing of the body is not onely lawful but pious and commendable ... to adore [and]

⁷⁹ *ibid*, ff. 46r-47v

⁸⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 48v

⁸¹ White, pp. 1, 3, 21, 31, 48; Matthews, p. 162

worship God with the bending of the body is a work of piety and religion, not unbecoming the divine majesty, nor contradictory to our fear and reverence ... This adoration [was] first appointed towards the altar and so alwaies performed because ... the altar is the best and chiefest and holiest part of all the church household stuffe'.⁸² Like Drake, Duncon was quick to point out that: 'We attribute no particle of our worship to the altar, either transitively or relatively, or any other way; we onely reverence God before or towards the altar'.⁸³ Perhaps Drake and Duncon were of one mind on the issue of adoration because both had been influenced by practice at Pembroke Hall, for in the chapel there 'adoration [was] used by all at ingresse and exgress and when ... approaches [were] made to the altar'.⁸⁴

Adoration, or altar worship, was uniquely controversial, but the indignation of Drake's accusers was aroused too by the fact that he bowed at the name of Jesus and knelt as he read the litany.⁸⁵ These practices were, of course, canonical and it is therefore no surprise to discover that many other Essex clergymen performed them. However, it is worth noting that the depositions against five of Drake's fellow Essex Laudians noted that they too favoured bowing in church, for it is a reminder that obedience to pre-Laudian ceremonies was as important to Laudian clergymen as the Laudian innovations. The first of the five Laudian clergymen was Edward Jenkinson, who apparently went so far as to say that 'those who did not bow at the name of Jesus would bow in Hell thereafter'. Robert Snell was more moderate, he simply bowed to a crucifix in Matching church. Thomas Wiborow, by contrast, 'suspended persons from the sacrament for not bowing at the name of Jesus', while Thomas Wilson 'bowed to the east on entering the church and at the name of Jesus' and Nicholas Wright 'bowed coming in and going out of church'.⁸⁶ Two of those who were not named by parishioners as bowing in church, John Browning and Daniel Whitby, nevertheless

⁸² Duncon, *De Adoratione*, pp. 12, 20

⁸³ *ibid*, 14

⁸⁴ BL Harleian MS 7019, f. 81r

⁸⁵ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, ff. 50v-r, 51v

⁸⁶ White, pp. 6, 15, 16, 19; Matthews, p. 169

defended bodily worship in their writings. In 1636 Browning wrote: ‘If God call for the soul how much more do he call for that , which hath its being and motion from the soul, the body ... He requireth reverence of the whole man.’⁸⁷ Whitby, writing 8 years later, made a similar point: ‘every posture of the body is doctrinal to the mind ... there is a carriage to be observed in devotion ... the body is the looking glass to the soul’.⁸⁸ Duppa too stressed the importance of bodily reverence on the part of the worshipper.⁸⁹ Matthew Wren agreed with him: ‘We being bodies also and not only spirits, the spirit alone will not suffice us ... but such expressions withal we must make, as that the performance of the duty may be ... read in our outward deportment’.⁹⁰

A further point on which Drake and the other clergymen quoted above would have agreed was that the bodily ‘attitude’ of an individual receiving holy communion was especially important. Drake, like all Laudians, believed that communicants should kneel at the altar rails at the receiving of the sacrament. Indeed, as he explained he refused to give the communion to those who would not adopt this position: ‘I omitted to administer the sacrament to divers ... in obedience to the order given by Sir Nathaniel Brent ... in the Archepiscopal visitation and by Dr. Duck in the episcopal ... that all should receive at the rail. Besides it was a custom used in the parish before, and continued upon communions since my being parson, which I desired still to preserve entire and not to suffer them to innovate in one particular, according to the rule of the wise man: “Give the water no passage, no not a little”; fearing lest the yielding to one omission or alteration might be an inlet for many to follow’. There is no reason to doubt that communion was given from the rail before Drake’s arrival in the parish but as he only took up residence in Radwinter in September 1638, it was not necessarily a long standing precedent. All the same, it is

⁸⁷ Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, p. 22

⁸⁸ D. Whitby, *The Vindication of the Form of Common Prayers Used in the Church of England*, (Oxford, 1644), p. 39

⁸⁹ B. Duppa, *Holy Rules and Helps*, (London, 1675), p. 91

⁹⁰ M. Wren, *A Sermon Preached Before the King’s Majesty*, (Cambridge, 1627), p. 11

interesting that Drake should suggest that it was not his wish to give communion from the rail but his parishioners' wish to receive it from elsewhere that was innovatory.

As if his attitude to the altar rails was not sufficient proof of the significance accorded by Drake to the sacrament, the frequency with which he administered it, once every two months, is revealing. That Drake celebrated holy communion six times a year as opposed to the three required by the Prayer Book indicates that he believed that an increase in faith and grace could be obtained through the sacraments.⁹¹ Drake's scathing attack on his replacement at Radwinter, William Voyle, following one of the latter's sermons also reveals a little about his attitude to the sacraments: 'William Voyle, making a dissuasive sermon as judging ye parishioners ignorant and unfit to receive the h[oly] communion, told them that the word was more necessarie for them; that faith, repentance, etc. which they wanted, was never begot by the sacrament but by the word. And laying many foul scandals on the Church of England, said that this (it being Palm Sundaie) and Easter Daie were and had been two most bloody daies in England in regard of the many souls damned by unworthy receiving. He professed likewise in the said sermon that he had no power either from God or from man to administer it. Which confirmeth suspicions generally had of him, that he is not in sacred orders, at least not of priesthood.' By way of conclusion to this story Drake added that on Easter Monday: 'Few not ten receiv[ed] the communion [and] in the afternoon William Voyle dared to give thanks for God blessing his pains in keeping the people from profaning the Lord's table.'⁹²

The above passages demonstrate two things: that Voyle believed it more important for the laity to hear the word than to receive the sacrament and that Drake believed the opposite. This should not by extension be taken to mean that Drake preached infrequently. On the contrary, there is reason to suppose that he delivered sermons regularly. Not conclusive but worth noting, is the negative evidence that amongst the many and wide ranging complaints made against Drake there exists no

⁹¹ A. Hunt, 'The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 161. (1998), p. 41

⁹² *ibid.* f. 49v.

reference to his failing to preach on a regular basis. Drake was not accused either of constantly repeating the same sermons, although one parishioner did mention in passing that Drake returned more than once to the same theme.⁹³ More pertinent is the fact that the description given by one of Drake's parishioners of a typical Sunday service at Radwinter suggests that it was normal for a sermon to be delivered: 'Our minister doth usually in time of divine service ... read the common praier, the litanie, the creed ... the epistle and the gospel, etc. and after the sermon reads ... what is called the second service'.⁹⁴ It is perhaps relevant too that six of the complaints made against Drake concern pronouncements he made whilst preaching.

Since none of Drake's sermons survive, it is valuable to examine a little more closely the ideas his parishioners found so offensive, although it must be remembered that it is likely that most of Drake's sermons were far less controversial. One of the sermons which was greeted with distaste was about the presence of Christ on the altar and has already been discussed, as have the two which were concerned with the related subjects of the merits of superstition over sacrilege and the sinfulness of destroying images. The funeral sermon in which Drake mused upon the efficacy of the prayers made by the saints in heaven has been discussed too, but the final two will be scrutinised at this point. The message of the first of the remaining two sermons is the most difficult accurately to reproduce, for Drake was clear that in their accusations his parishioners had misrepresented his words but he failed to completely clarify his position. Nevertheless, it seems that he attributed the obstinacy and uncooperative nature of some parishioners to the presence amongst them of the Antichrist who, so Drake explained, had also been 'at work in Christ's time, nay higher yet, in paradise'.⁹⁵ The belief that the Devil was constantly and continuously at work on earth can hardly have been controversial but it is easy to see why members of the laity in Radwinter were offended at the suggestion that they had been corrupted by Satan.

⁹³ White, pp. 1, 3, 5, 15, 19, 31, 37, 45; Matthews, pp. 147, 148, 149, 153, 155, 163, 168

⁹⁴ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 46v

⁹⁵ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 47r

Furthermore, that such a sermon was delivered at all is doubtless indicative of a severe breakdown of respect and cordiality in the parish.

Relations were certainly extremely strained by the time that Drake delivered the last sermon of which any part survives. In this sermon Drake ‘pray[ed] for the archbishops, bishops and as he termed them, priests of that sacred order, he ... prayed that the Lord would prosper their handiwork, and strike through the loins of them that rise up against them, that they may never rise again’. The preceding quotation is, of course, not from Drake but one of his parishioners but Drake, far from denying that he had so acted, defended himself: ‘surely they are shrewdly put to it for articles against me, who make the expression of my duty and charity the ground of one. That I [prayed for the bishops] is far from a crime, in my opinion, as the not doing of it would have been too near one in the judgement of the Christian world. To urge the Church’s canon for my plea perhaps might breed another quarrel, but I shall urge it though, and back it with the constant practice of all Christians, who knew how much the Church’s peace and happiness depended upon them ... now, if ever [the bishops] have need of the prayers of Christian people, is made too evident by the rude behaviour and tumultuous practices against their persons and their office [but] my ground was far more general; the consideration of the despised estate of all the clergy.’⁹⁶ That Drake defended the bishops in the early 1640s is to be expected in view of the fact that he referred to Brian Duppa as ‘bishop’ long after Parliament had officially abolished both the title and the position. Drake’s concern at that time for the state of the clergy in general is no more surprising for he was both shocked and hurt by the treatment he, and his curates Augustine Rolfe and Thomas Garnham, had received at the hands of the laity in Radwinter, and several of those whom Drake mentions in his autobiography as friends or acquaintances fared no better. On a slightly different note, it is apparent that Drake felt that the estate of clerical office was undermined by the appointment of men such as his replacement Voyle, who did

⁹⁶ *ibid*, f. 51r

not conduct themselves with appropriate dignity and decorum.⁹⁷ That Drake would, had he been able, have worked as a beneficed minister during the Interregnum is improbable for he saw himself not as a Protestant clergyman but more precisely as a minister of the Church of England.

Another issue on which Drake felt strongly was the use of the term sabbath; he was adamant that it was unsuitable: ‘the Judaism of the sabbath was abolished by Christ and the name by the Apostles, who call it the Lord’s daie, or the first daie of the week.’ Since this was the case, Drake reasoned that ‘honest and moderate recreations [are] allowed out of the time of divine service.’ In other words, Drake thought it was acceptable to play sports on a Sunday, for the ‘honest and moderate recreations’ to which he refers must be those games permitted on the Lord’s Day by *Book of Sports*. In voicing his support for the *Book of Sports*, Drake was not alone; at least seven Essex Laudians actively supported Sunday sports, as opposed to simply carrying out their legal requirement to read the *Book of Sports* in church. Edward Cherry argued that it was ‘lawful to play on a Sunday’, Thomas Darnell ‘read the *Book of Sports* with an approbation thereof’ and participated in ‘sports and plays’ on Sundays, Edward Jenkinson ‘encouraged playing on Sunday’, John Lake ‘urged the *Book of Sports*’, John Simpson ‘allowed Sunday games’, Josiah Tomlinson ‘read and justified the *Book of Sports*’, Clement Vincent ‘play[ed] and encourag[ed] Sunday games’ and Nicholas Wright ‘read the *Book of Sports* and preached in its favour’.⁹⁸

The playing of sports on Sunday was, of course, only permissible outside the time of divine service. Drake was therefore at pains to explain that when catechising the children in Radwinter he had: ‘referred to His Majesty’s Proclamation: and in reference to the limitations therein expressed, have often called upon Richard Durden, one of my churchwardens and complainants to send the youth from their sports to divine service and catechism.’ Drake stressed too that public worship should not only be a feature of Sundays: ‘Holie Daies [are] equally commanded to be observed’, he

⁹⁷ *ibid*, ff. 8r-9v

⁹⁸ White, pp. 1, 3, 15, 19, 29, 36; Matthews, pp. 157, 163, 165

told his parishioners.⁹⁹ An important aspect of public worship on both Sundays and Holy Days was, for Drake, the recitation of set prayers. This is demonstrated by his reaction to the abolition of the Book of Common Prayer. He wrote: ‘How has it sinned this Prayer Book? Surely it is us, Lord, we have sinned!’*¹⁰⁰ As already indicated, the Book of Common Prayer was but one of the manuals of set prayer in which Drake put faith, two of the others were, inevitably, Lancelot Andrewes’ *Private Devotions* and *Manual of Devotions for the Sick*. In his preface to the latter Drake informed the readers: ‘From the general inspection of those his set and sacred forms, as you are conceived of his piety, so you may learn his judgement concerning *extempore* conceptions and undigested prayers.’¹⁰¹ The opinion Drake attributed to Andrewes is one generally associated with conformity in general rather than Laudianism in particular but followers of the latter were always anxious to endorse set prayer. Andrewes’ erstwhile chaplain, John Browning, for example, believed set prayers prevented ‘the danger of a mouth’s rashness’.¹⁰² Brian Duppa’s faith in set prayer was such that he himself composed devotions.¹⁰³ Daniel Whitby offered the following defence of the forms in the Book of Common Prayer: ‘Solitary and single prayer is sweet and presents the soul with security and raptures, to convey herself to God. But common prayer is more forcible and fortified by union and agreement with Christian minds. Where so many hearts and minds are lifted up together, they pull down God among them by force of arms.’¹⁰⁴ Benjamin Laney offered a different defence of set prayer: ‘do not accuse set forms for want of life in themselves ... how ... should that be? If the sense of real wants and blessings, which are always the same, cannot keep our affections, how should a new set of words do it? Can we imagine that God should be taken with variety and shift of phrases, or that the affection that

⁹⁹ *ibid*, f. 47v-r

¹⁰⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 10r

¹⁰¹ Drake’s introduction to Andrewes, *Private Devotions* p. A7r

¹⁰² Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, p. 74

¹⁰³ Duppa, *Private Forms*, *passim*

¹⁰⁴ Whitby, *The Vindication of the Form of Common Prayers*, p. 22

takes heat from them, will render the service more acceptable to God?’¹⁰⁵ Drake agreed with all the men cited above that set prayer was far superior to all other forms and explained why in some detail: ‘There is too much of the pharisee in him that dares trust his memory, his phancy or invention, before the majesty of heaven; when even his most premeditated and weighted thoughts, though cloathed in the best attire of language, would be esteemed by himself too unworthy to be offered to his prince. And yet, such is the irreligion of this age, the most high God must take up and be content with that homely entertainment which my Lord and Lady, forsooth, would not receive from their most faithful servant without great scorn and indignation.’¹⁰⁶

The comparison of the worshipper to a servant encapsulates accurately Drake’s view of the true Christian for he believed that the former like the latter should express his loyalty using the appropriate ceremonies and rituals and be humble but dignified. In terms of the worship of God, this meant acknowledging God through bodily reverence, reciting set prayers, receiving the sacrament with a clear conscience and due humility, and listening to the word of God. It was important to Drake too that all this was done in the correct environment which for him meant a well maintained and beautifully decorated church. In his ideas on these subjects Drake was, as far as can be told from the surviving evidence, in close agreement with his many Laudian friends and typical of the Laudian clergymen working in Essex during the 1630s. So, although Drake’s life was unusually colourful, he is highly representative of the Laudian movement.

¹⁰⁵ B. Laney, *Two Sermons*, (London, 1668). p. 18

¹⁰⁶ Drake’s introduction to Andrewes, *Private Devotions* p. A7r-A8v

CHAPTER THREE: HENRY GREENWOOD: A REPENTANT PURITAN NONCONFORMIST?

Henry Greenwood, a minister in Essex from 1596 to 1634, began his career as a nonconformist Puritan but just before the end of his life moderated his Puritanism and published a tract in which he urged conformity to the established church. His life and his beliefs, both before and after his decision to conform, are the central themes of this chapter. However, before they can be fully explored it is necessary to answer two questions. How should Puritanism be defined? And, is it really possible to speak of Puritanism during the period in which Greenwood served as a clergyman?

The second of these questions arises because Patrick Collinson, in an assessment endorsed by Peter Lake, argues that Puritanism faded away soon after the Hampton Court Conference and did not reappear until shortly before the outbreak of the English Civil War. Collinson believes that the fortunes of the Puritan movement began to decline in 1588 with the deaths of the Puritan patron Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester and the godly preacher John Field. This decline was hastened by Lord Chancellor Hutton's clear warning in February 1589 that Elizabeth I would not tolerate any demands for further reformation and by Richard Bancroft's harsh words for the Puritans in his Paul's Cross sermon of the same month and year. The Martin Marprelate tracts put a further nail in the coffin of the Puritan movement, for the publication of these uncompromising works caused a crackdown on Puritanism. As a result of this, Puritans such as George Gifford and Arthur Hildersham lost their livings or were deprived of the right to preach. A more significant outcome of the Marprelate controversy was that nine Puritans, including Melancthon Jewel and Thomas Cartwright were arrested. They suffered a long period of imprisonment and finally a trial at the end of the which they had to promise that Puritan conferences and classes would cease to meet. This effectively signalled the end of the 'Presbyterian movement' but Puritans more generally did not yet give up hope, instead they waited for an opportunity at which to reassert themselves. With

the death of Elizabeth, the accession of James I and the organisation of the Hampton Court Conference they hoped they had found such an opportunity. They were to be disappointed; James emerged from the Hampton Court Conference as an opponent 'of the principles of dissent and nonconformity'. Under this blow, Collinson argues, the movement, which was already weakened by the destruction of Presbyterianism, crumbled.¹

Collinson's assessment does not, though, stand unchallenged. Furthermore, his critics, the most notable of whom are J.T. Cliffe, Jacqueline Eales and Nicholas Tyacke, have the weight of evidence on their side in arguing that although Presbyterianism was destroyed, the Puritan movement survived. Cliffe has shown that in several gentry families, such as the Barringtons in Essex, Puritan sentiments remained consistent through many generations.² Eales has demonstrated that Sir Anthony Cope and Sir Robert Harley, amongst others, ensured the continuity of Puritan patronage throughout the early seventeenth century. She has proved too that Puritan preaching survived thanks to the efforts of a group of clergymen the best known of whom are Stephen Egerton, William Gouge, John Dod and Arthur Hildersham. That devotional works by these and other men continued to sell well during the early seventeenth century also emerges from Eales' research.³ Wills and book dedications, as Tyacke has pointed out, furnish yet more evidence for the survival of Puritan networks in the early 1600s.⁴

So, Puritanism undoubtedly existed during the time of Greenwood's ministry, but of what precisely did it consist? This is a difficult question to answer because some historians clearly feel more comfortable identifying Puritans than defining

¹ Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 385-462, quotation from p. 461. For Lake's agreement with Collinson see P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church*, (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 284-285

² J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry: The Great Puritan Families of Early Stuart England*, (London, 1984), *passim*; J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry Beseiged 1650-1700*, (London, 1993), *passim*

³ J. Eales, 'A Road to Revolution: The Continuity of Puritanism, 1559-1642', in C. Durston and J. Eales, (ed), *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560-1700*, (London, 1996), pp. 184-209

⁴ Tyacke, *Fortunes of English Puritanism*, pp. 3-21

Puritanism. However, various meanings have been ascribed to the word.⁵ At one end of the spectrum is the now almost entirely discredited idea that the term is synonymous with Calvinism; at the other is a rendering of it as the desire for ‘further Protestant reforms in liturgy and organisation’.⁶ The latter definition is more than adequate in most circumstances but lacks the detail and complexity required for a study, such as this one, in which Puritanism takes centre stage. Fortunately, Patrick Collinson and Peter Lake, in particular, have provided more comprehensive definitions of Puritanism, albeit ones written with reference to Elizabethan Puritanism. No Puritan, Collinson argues, was wholly dissatisfied with the Church of England; all believed that it was at least partially reformed according to the godly model. Beyond that, Collinson writes, there were differences, for not all Puritans were equally anxious to achieve reform. Some were happy as long as they were allowed follow their own consciences in the matter of religion, others pressed for wide scale reform of the church.⁷ Collinson does not therefore only define Puritans by their refusal to conform to established rituals and ceremonies. He argues that the Puritan movement also encompassed those who can be characterised by their adherence to a distinctive form of piety and their participation in ‘voluntary religious exercises’.⁸ In other words, Collinson’s Puritan movement comprised not only nonconformists but also moderate Puritans. The latter Collinson describes as those who believed: that the Bible alone should be used as a source of guidance, instruction and authority; that sermons were more important than the liturgy; that worship should be characterised by ‘simplicity, sincerity ... purity ... directness and brevity’; and that life should be a constant act of both public and private worship. To this end, Puritans

⁵ William Lamont and Peter White both pinpoint Puritans without providing a general definition of Puritanism. W. Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy*, (London, 1996), *passim* and White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, *passim*

⁶ J. D. Eusden, *Puritans, Lawyers and Politics in Early Seventeenth Century England*, (Yale, 1958), p. 20; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 7-8. Julian Davies provides a definition of the term very similar to that given by Tyacke. Davies, pp. 102-3.

⁷ P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559-1625*, (Oxford, 1982), pp. 1-38

⁸ P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, (London, 1967), pp. 26-27

referred to their own Bibles during sermons, were prepared to travel relatively large distances, both on Sundays and weekdays, to hear godly preachers, and studied the Bible at home or at meetings with like-minded kinsfolk. Peter Lake agrees with Collinson that Puritanism as a type of ‘piety and divinity’ was easily distinguishable from other forms of Protestantism but cautions the reader to remember that Puritanism was not composed of a set of unique features each of which was typically or exclusively Puritan but was rather comprised of a collection of thoughts and practices several of which ‘taken individually’ were common to Protestantism in general.⁹ The attitudes and actions that Collinson and Lake describe as typically Puritan have been seen, by, for example, Keith Wrightson, as belonging almost exclusively to the ‘middling sort’ in society but Collinson especially is quick to stress that Puritan piety of the type described above could and did cut across social divides.¹⁰

As importantly, Puritan piety was as much a feature of nonconformist as moderate Puritanism. What set nonconformists apart from their moderate counterparts was, Collinson explains, their belief that the sacrament should be administered in ordinary bread, as opposed to wafers, to seated communicants and their opposition to the use both of the surplice and the sign of the cross at baptism.¹¹ In terms of the Church of England these were radical views and this explains why Stephen Brachlow prefers to use the epithet ‘radical’ to ‘nonconformist’ when describing this type of Puritan.¹² The former term has been avoided here because, for

⁹ P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 1-15

P. Lake, ‘Defining Puritanism -Again?’ in F. Bremer (ed), *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth Century Anglo-American Faith*, (Boston, 1993), pp. 6-7

¹⁰ Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 356, 358-9; Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, pp. 242-283; P. Collinson, *English Puritanism*, (2nd edition, London, 1983), pp. 12-13; P. Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England*, (London, 1988), p. 153; K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling 1525-1700*, (2nd edition, Oxford, 1995), pp. 110-172; Hunt, *Puritan Movement*, *passim*. Martin Ingram also argues that Puritanism cut across social divides. M. Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640*, (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 84-124

¹¹ P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, (London, 1967), pp. 12-13 and *passim*. P. Collinson, *English Puritanism*, pp. 15, 18, 20.

¹² J. Brachlow, *The Communion of Saints: Radical Puritan and Separatists Ecclesiology 1570-1625*, (Oxford, 1988), *passim*

Lake, radical Puritans and separatists were one and the same. By contrast, the Puritans on whom this thesis focuses, those Lake calls 'extreme moderates', were, despite their antipathy towards and disregard of ceremonies, practising members of the Church of England.¹³

Collinson's and Lake's definitions of Puritanism were, as has already been stated, formulated primarily for the Elizabethan period but, even accounting for the end of the Presbyterian movement, early Stuart Puritanism was little different. Bible-centred piety and an evangelical zeal for 'Godly' sermons were still the hallmarks of moderate Puritanism. This is not to say that no moderate Puritan desired reform of the ceremonies and rituals of the church. It was simply the case that as moderates they believed that patience, tolerance and conformity were the best ways in which to persuade the authorities to institute the changes they desired. Nonconformist Puritans were far more uncompromising. They refused to use the surplice or the sign of the cross at baptism, would not kneel to receive the sacrament and were generally hostile to the Prayer Book for it was their belief that further reformation of the Church of England would be achieved most quickly and effectively by direct action. The disagreements between the moderates and the nonconformists must not be exaggerated; all Puritans were agreed on the importance of frequent, 'painful' preaching, all shared the same intense piety and, as studies both of individual Puritans and of the movement in general are a reminder, support networks and friendships often transcended the divisions between moderates and nonconformists.¹⁴ In short, Puritanism was a movement as opposed to a series of disparate individuals striving for the same goal. It is frustrating, therefore, that the connection of each Puritan to the wider group cannot always be fully reconstructed, especially when the person in question produced a large number of theological works. One of these people is Henry Greenwood, the Essex Puritan clergyman whose beliefs

¹³ P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker*. (London, 1988), pp. 71-85; Lake, *Moderate Puritanism*, *passim*

¹⁴ Webster, *Godly Clergy*, *passim*; Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, *passim*; Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, *passim*

are detailed in his ten published sermons but about whose career relatively little can be discovered.

Of Greenwood's origins, parentage and early schooling nothing can be discovered, but it is known that he matriculated from St. John's College, Cambridge in 1564. He obtained his BA and MA from the same college in 1568 and 1571 respectively, was ordained a deacon in 1571 and a priest the following year. From 1576 to 1596 he held the position of headmaster at Felsted School. Greenwood resigned from the school to accept his first cure, Hatfield Peverel, where he worked as vicar until 1605. He left Hatfield Peverel in 1605 and took up residence in Hempsted, to serve as minister to that village and to the adjoining parish of Great Sampford. In 1609 Robert, Lord Rich presented Greenwood to the living of Little Leighs in Essex but he seems to have resigned the cure soon after his appointment. Hempsted and Great Sampford he retained until 1634. Newcourt records Greenwood as resigning both livings in that year but as he was by that time eighty nine and seems never to have served another living it seems more likely that he died in residence, although this is impossible to confirm as Greenwood's will does not survive.¹⁵ The lack of a will should not be taken as evidence that Greenwood was either a poor or an insignificant figure. On the contrary, he owned a house in Finsbury Fields in London and was known at court. His second published piece *Tormenting Tophet or a Terrible Description of Hell* was originally preached at Paul's Cross in London on June 14th 1614 and his final work *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven* was dedicated to Robert Levystone, gentleman of the bedchamber for his 'kind respect ... in court and country' demonstrating that Greenwood had received favoured treatment from at least one of the King's inner circle.¹⁶

Well known though he may have been in his lifetime, Greenwood has been almost totally ignored by historians. Yet, as has already been hinted, he is an

¹⁵ Venn, Part I, Volume II, p. 261; M. Craze, *A History of Felsted School 1564-1947*, (Ipswich, 1955), p. 40; Newcourt, pp. 388, 515

¹⁶ H. Greenwood, *Greenwood's Workes*, (13th Impression, London, 1650), p. 326; H. Greenwood, *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven*, (London, 1634), sigs. A3, A7

intriguing figure for in the 1630s, with little explanation, he altered his views on religious matters.¹⁷ Until that time he had been, by his own admission and according to the evidence of the archdeaconry court act books, a nonconformist.¹⁸ Towards the end of his life he repented his earlier stance and, as he explained in the preface to *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven*, a work licensed in 1633 by Abbot's chaplain, Robert Austin, his mission became the attempt to persuade others that arguments about ceremony and ritual were pointless and damaging and should be laid aside: 'I desire to be an imator of the blessed apostle [Paul] in this Christian endeavour [of peacemaking], considering what great quarrels and hot contentions are found in our British churches about matters of nothing, meere circumstances and bare ceremonies, and what a rent is made among us by the same, to the great advantage of Satan's kingdom, and much to the damage of the Kingdom of Christ. Now to quiet these unnecessary jarres and make peace about the same (peace making being a blessed thing) I have ventured to set forth in this piece of scripture something about things indifferent. That we being of one mind may live in peace.'¹⁹ In this passage, Greenwood is not arguing that the Prayer Book ceremonies should be used because obeying the authorities is inherently right but rather because peace in the Church of England was desirable.

How different is this picture of Greenwood the peacemaker from that presented nearly fifty years earlier by William Rust, vicar of Felsted. In 1583 the said William Rust was brought before the Court of Quarter Sessions on a charge of slander against Robert, Lord Rich. Rust was accused of claiming that Rich wanted to:

¹⁷ The date of Greenwood's 'conversion' to conformity cannot be set exactly because of the difficulty of interpreting the surviving evidence. The book in which Greenwood made clear his change of heart, *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven*, was not published until 1634 and Greenwood's last presentment for nonconformity was in May 1632. (ERO D/ACA 48, f. 160v) However, the only known gentleman of the bedchamber with the name Robert Levystone was dead by December 1630. (*C.S.P.D. 1629-1631*, ed. J. Bruce, (London, 1860), p. 408) But, since the presentment to the archdeaconry courts could not have been for an offence committed two years earlier and *Marks and No Marks* was not licensed until 1633, Greenwood must have changed his views late in 1632 or early in 1633. Arber, Volume IV, p. 269

¹⁸ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 122v, D'ACA 45, f. 5v, D'ACA 48, ff. 158v, 160v

¹⁹ Arber, Volume IV, p. 269; Greenwood, *Marks*, sig. A4

‘have his will to put men out of their living and have some serve the cure for little or nothing’. Further to this, Rust was said to have told others: ‘that Greenwood being a school master ... did mislike the Book of Common Prayer and therefore the said Greenwood refused to be a minister, and [said] that the ... book was not fine enough for [him], and that the Lord Rich was [his] only bearer therein’.²⁰ Of course, we would probably know nothing of Rust’s accusations had they not been disputed but since there is no surviving record of whether the court decided in his favour or that of Lord Rich it is difficult to pass judgement on the validity of his claims. Still, the following observations are relevant. Lord Rich was like his famous son, the second earl of Warwick, a Puritan. His commitment to Puritanism shows particularly strongly in a letter he wrote to his cousin and fellow Puritan Sir Francis Barrington in which he commented on hearing that Archbishop Whitgift was ill: ‘I heard before the receipt of your letter of my Lord Archbishop’s being taken sick, whose true amendment in charity I wish, praying he may repent him of the wrongs of God’s church and ministers he hath done. And that by this example the rest of his robe, that have been Sauls may now be converted into Pauls, that before the end they may be builders and not miners of the decayed walls of Jerusalem’.²¹ Rich’s concern at what he perceived to be the insufficiently reformed state of the Church of England is, because of the evidence of this letter, unquestionable. Therefore, that he did wish to replace some clergymen, presumably those he believed inadequate, with others, is not unfeasible. That Greenwood and Rich were in some sense allies is also credible for, as mentioned above, Rich eventually presented Greenwood to the living of Little Leighs. As for the suggestion that Greenwood ‘misliked’ the Prayer Book this is surely indisputable for in *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven* he admitted to earlier ‘doubts’ about the surplice and the use of the cross in baptism. Furthermore, during his time at Hempsted and Great Sampford Greenwood was

²⁰ ERO Q/SR 84/28

²¹ Letter of 1604 from Lord Rich to Sir Francis Barrington quoted in G. A. Lowndes, ‘The History of the Barrington Family’, *Essex Archaeological Society Transactions*, (1884), pp. 21-22

indicted at the archdeaconry court for not wearing the surplice and for refusing to read prayers on holy days or festival days.²² Maybe in 1583 Greenwood felt sufficiently strongly opposed to the Prayer Book ceremonies to refuse to accept the office of clergyman or perhaps this was an exaggeration on Rust's part. If the former is true, Greenwood had changed his views by 1601, the year in which he accepted his first benefice, but in view of his later, more substantial alterations of opinion an earlier change of mind is not improbable.

The eventual shifts in Greenwood's ideas moved him some distance, religiously speaking, from Robert, Lord Rich but perhaps they brought him closer to his other patrons. Robert Levystone, for example, as a gentleman of the King's bedchamber and the chosen dedicatee of *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven* might reasonably be expected to agree with the conformist stance to which Greenwood was a late convert. For Sir James Ingram or Sir Henry Lello, to whom Greenwood jointly dedicated *The Blessed'st Birth that Ever Was*, no such suggestion can be made. Both are obscure figures.²³ As is Jane Burgoin, daughter of William Kemp of Spains Hall, Finchingfield, Essex and dedicatee of *The Jaylor's Jayle Delivery*. It is true that her father was 'converted' to Puritanism but this did not occur until many years after his daughter's marriage so his actions are in no way a guide to her beliefs.²⁴ The sympathies of Greenwood's 'good friends' Lestrange and Frances Mordaunt of Messingham Hall, Norfolk and of Lestrange Mordaunt's son and heir, Robert and his wife Amy, to which couples Greenwood dedicated in total three books, are perhaps less uncertain. The Mordaunts had the right to present to the livings of Hempsted and Great Sampford and Lestrange may have chosen Greenwood in 1601 because of his Puritan sympathies. In any case, it is suggestive that Greenwood was

²² ERO D/ACA 48, f. 160v

²³ Greenwood, *Marks*, sig. A3; H. Greenwood, *The Blessed'st Birth that Ever Was or the Blessed Birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, (London, 1628), sig. A3

²⁴ H. Greenwood, *The Jaylor's Jayle Delivery*, (London, 1620), sig. A3; T. Webster, *Stephen Marhsall and Finchingfield*, (Chelmsford, 1994), p. 3

replaced in 1634, this time at the instigation of Robert Mordaunt, by another Puritan, Samuel Newton.²⁵

Greenwood's views, unlike those of his patrons are, if not always unambiguously expressed, at least relatively easy to deduce. This is a result of his relatively numerous publications. Greenwood's first book was published in 1606 and subsequent works appeared at regular intervals over the next twenty eight years. Furthermore, a total of thirteen editions were produced of Greenwood's *Workes*, both during his lifetime and after his death. The earlier versions contain only five sermons and the later ones eight but the individual texts are almost identical from one edition to the next. That Greenwood added new sermons to the collection and made regular, if minor, revisions to the text does, however, indicate that he remained interested in clarifying and propagating the ideas contained therein until, at the earliest, 1628. This was the year in which the eleventh edition of the *Workes*, and the last to which a text was added or any textual changes made, appeared.²⁶ Greenwood's last two tracts, a collection of prayers written for prisoners and *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven*, were never included within the covers of his *Workes*. This is appropriate, for these two pieces belong to the second phase of Greenwood's career, the few years during which he was a conformist. Also, they do not, unlike the rest of Greenwood's *oeuvre*, take salvation and judgement as their central themes.

Since judgement and salvation were the main topics covered in the sermons written by Greenwood during his nonconformist phase, it seems appropriate to begin an analysis of his beliefs by examining the way in which he dealt with these subjects.

²⁵ H. Greenwood, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement*, (London, 1606), sig. A4; H. Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet*, sig. A3
H. Greenwood, *A Joyful Tractate or the Most Blessed Baptism*, (London, 1616), sig. A3; Newcourt, p. 515

²⁶ No copies of the twelfth edition of Greenwood's *Workes* survive, nor is it known in which year it was published but the eleventh and thirteenth editions, which were published in 1628 and 1650, are almost exactly the same. The only differences being the title pages and that there is continuous pagination in the thirteenth but not the eleventh edition. Since the main text of the twelfth and thirteenth editions must have been identical and the twelfth edition may have been published very soon after the eleventh it would be unwise to assume that Greenwood necessarily still agreed with the ideas contained therein after 1628, for the final two editions of Greenwood's works may have been produced simply at the behest of the publisher.

Both were the focus of Greenwood's first published sermon, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement*. In that work he wrote that everyone would be judged twice, once upon death and again at the return to earth of Christ. On the first occasion 'particular judgement is exercised and executed upon every man ... [and] the soule [separated from] the body, whilst at the second 'the soul *and* body shall be judged'. The purpose of the latter judgement was, Greenwood explained, 'to declare to all the world, assembled then together, the just judgement of God, that he hath justly saved the godly and justly condemned the wicked'.²⁷ The process by which God chose the elect and damned the reprobate was described in another sermon, *Tormenting Tophet or a Terrible Description of Hell*: 'Adam therefore being thus created that he might either stand or fall, by the Devil's subtill suggestion, and by abuse of his own free will, received a double downe-fall, the fall of sinne by disobedience, and the fall of death by sinne ... The Lord therefore having pity on his miserable estate vouchsafed in his son to shew mercy to some by election to salvation as to show justice upon othersome by reprobation to damnation ... According to which irrevocable decree, the Lord hath prepared, even from the foundation of the earth, answerable places, a glorious habitation for the one and a terrible dungeon for the other.' Later in the same sermon Greenwood re-emphasised this point: 'the Lord hath irrevocably decreed of the state of Angels and men, before all worlds, for heaven and hell.'²⁸ These statements are unquestionably Calvinist, for they demonstrate a belief in double and unconditional predestination.²⁹

The fact of unconditional predestination should not, as Greenwood was careful regularly to stress, encourage the Christian to lead a reckless or ungodly life. Indeed, he warned against such behaviour: 'let all men that refuse the mercy of God, and defer their repentance, know that repentance is not theirs to command, but it is the great mercy of God, and is to bee feared, they that have refused it, offered, when

²⁷ Greenwood, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement* in *Workes*, pp. 65, 67. My italics.

²⁸ Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet* in *Workes*, pp. 232, 252

²⁹ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 1-3

they should have it, they shall go without'.³⁰ In order to avoid such a dire consequence people should, Greenwood insisted, ensure that they were 'ingrafted into Christ by a true and lively faith ... flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, one with Christ and Christ with him'.³¹ Having made sure their faith, Christians should 'worke out [their] salvation with fear and trembling' or, as Greenwood wrote on another occasion: 'In the fear of God ... above all things ... make sure your election, and that by your vocation: your vocation by your justification, your justification, by this sanctification; the reward therefore, will be eternal glorification'.³² In short and simple terms, Greenwood was counselling Christians to seek for assurance that they were among the number of the elect; assurance they would only receive, Greenwood felt, if they led godly lives. The reward for so doing was certain, Greenwood told readers of *The Jaylor's Jayle Delivery*: 'the Lord [will] work this excellent change in [your] hearts ... create in [you] all a new heart ... renew a right spirit within [you] ... take away [your] stony hearts and give [you] hearts of flesh ... renew ... [your] minds and judgement, wills and affections and words and action' and thereby 'signifieth unto [you] that he is your salvation'.³³ The idea that the elect could, in the words of Richard Rogers, Puritan lecturer at Wethersfield, Essex, 'seek out ... the certaintie and assurance of salvation' was one peculiar to experimental predestinarians. This group of whom the best known is the Elizabethan theologian William Perkins, thought that it was the duty of the elect to make their salvation known to themselves.³⁴

What were individuals to do in order to receive the signal from God that they were among the elect? Perkins advised believers 'to scrutinize their claims of faith' and to consider whether or not they had shown any signs of repentance or sanctification.³⁵ In his 1608 tract *The Race Celestial or A Speedy Course to*

³⁰ Greenwood, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement in Workes*, p. 77

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 7

³² Greenwood, *The Race Celestial in Workes*, p. 138; Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet in Workes*, pp.255-6

³³ Greenwood, *The Jaylor's Jayle Delivery in Workes*, pp. 461, 467

³⁴ R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, (Oxford, 1979), pp. 53, 80-81

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 8

Salvation, Greenwood gave some more specific advice: ‘It is profitable’, Greenwood informed his congregation, for a minister ‘to teach, to improve, to correct, to instruct in righteousness’. And it was important for all to ‘flie all occasion and every apparition of evill [and] ... delight in the company of those that fear the Lord, and excel in vertue’, for God would only give the signal to the most reverent and holy of people.³⁶ Christians were further instructed to ‘run *perseveranter*, perseverantly, and continually holding out to the end of the race’ and ‘to joyne vertue with faith; with vertue knowledge, with knowledge, temperance, with temperance, patience, with patience, godlinesse, with godlinesse, brotherly kindness, with brotherly kindness, love’. Or, as Greenwood expressed it on another occasion, to ‘sweep every corner of [their] hearts clean, with the broomes of penance, and ... water them with the salt tears of honest contrition, so that [they] may be fit receptories for the Lord to dwell in’.³⁷ The clergyman added that ‘every man and woman (as they tender the welfare of their deare souls) [should] resolve to suffer willingly and bear patiently, whatsoever calamity may befall them in this heavenly race’, remembering that ‘every Christian [must] suffer before he can be glorified’.³⁸ Following this advice would not, Greenwood warned, prove an easy task. He pointed out that in order to be successful it would be necessary to overcome three enemies: ‘The first enemy that withstandeth us in the way to heaven, is the Devil, who in respect of his cruelty and might is compared with a roaring lyon: the Devill ... goeth up and down, seeking whom he may devoure. The second enemy is the world, which is as subtill as the Devil is powerful, for by the profits and pleasures therein, it draweth many to the service of Satan. The third enemy, which is the flesh ... doth always rebell against the good notions of the spirit’.³⁹ Those who were able to resist these temptations could hope, Greenwood concluded, for the ‘*praemium promissum*, the promised reward’ of

³⁶ Greenwood, *The Race Celestial in Workes*, pp. 149, 152

³⁷ Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet in Workes* pp. 255-6; Greenwood, *The Race Celestial in Workes*, p. 163

³⁸ Greenwood, *The Race Celestial in Workes*, pp. 167, 183, 186-7

³⁹ *ibid*, p. 188

salvation: 'Let every Christian therefore (as he tendereth his everlasting salvation) cast his eyes upon this reward, and run in the race of godliness, so long as his life shall last: that whensoever it shall please the Lord to call him ... he may (having his name written in the book of life) be welcomed into his master's joy'.⁴⁰ All these quotations demonstrate that, in Greenwood's view, the great reward of salvation and the comfort of its certainty followed only from exertion, patience, fortitude, self-denial and repentance. In short, 'working out' one's salvation involved the Christian in active tasks. Indeed, initiative and action came from the believer more than from God: 'The only course our Lord doth take in the effectual calling and converting of such, whose names are written in the book of life, is this: he humbleth before he exalteth, he shows our damnable estate through sin by law, before ever he signifieth to us that he is our salvation'.⁴¹ So, achieving assurance of salvation was a difficult and sometimes lengthy process but by forgoing the 'carnal delight[s]' of this world and accepting the 'grace offered', the faithful Christian would gain the happiness, peace and security of knowing that after death he or she would be accepted into heaven.'⁴²

Greenwood did not offer as much direct guidance on how to pray as he did on obtaining salvation but he did compose many prayers for general use. His compositions were generally relatively lengthy, prosaic pieces, a stark contrast to the semi-poetic offerings of, for example, Lancelot Andrewes and Brian Duppa.⁴³ Greenwood's prayers cover, seemingly, almost every topic and situation pertinent to the life of a seventeenth century Christian. In his book, *The Prisoners Prayers*, a compendium of prayers written particularly for the inmates of Fleet Prison, there are, for example, prayers for brotherly love, patience, the conversion of the Jew, 'the gospel's continuance', deliverance from sin and prayers against disobedience to parents, plague, war and famine. Besides these, Greenwood wrote prayers that could

⁴⁰ *ibid*, pp. 213, 221

⁴¹ Greenwood, *The Jaylor's Jayle Delivery* in *Workes*, p. 461

⁴² Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet* in *Workes*, pp. 277, 311

⁴³ Andrewes, *Private Devotions*. *passim*; Duppa, *Private Forms*, *passim*

be used by every family in the morning and the evening.⁴⁴ Greenwood's decision to compose set prayers seems to be at odds with the nonconformist beliefs he held for most of his career. In fact, a belief in the value of set prayer was not incompatible with nonconformism. Even the radical Puritan lecturer of Dedham in Essex, John Rogers, conceded: 'True it is, that there is a place for set formes of prayers in the church, and of an ancient and profitable use it is in the church of God'.⁴⁵ Although the vast majority of Greenwood's set prayers were written for prisoners, a group he would doubtless have thought to need more spiritual guidance than most, that he decided to have them published is proof that he, like Rogers, considered set prayers to be of general value in the church.

Greenwood's opinions on *ex tempore* prayer, a form generally favoured by nonconformists, cannot be so easily deduced. All that can be said with confidence is that Greenwood never condemned that type of devotion. Of course, it could be argued that by providing set prayers for almost every situation, Greenwood was rendering *ex tempore* prayer redundant but there is no evidence that this was his intention. Nor is there any indication that Greenwood believed set prayer to be more efficacious than *ex tempore* prayer. It is feasible that he thought that each was an equally valid part of an individual's relationship with God.

There was, however, one prayer Greenwood valued above all else, the Lord's Prayer. It was, of course, a set prayer but it was different from all other set prayers because it had been given to the disciples by Christ. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Greenwood was so admiring of both its form and its content. In his *True and Conformable Exposition of the Lord's Prayer*, Greenwood explained: 'For as much as prayer to the soule, is as necessary as the keel to the ship and the foundation to the house ... And forasmuch also, we can have neither grace to believe, nor grace to obey, without fervent and faithfull prayer, I have thought good, as briefly as I can (for the

⁴⁴ Greenwood, *Workes*, pp. 503-5, 506-9; H. Greenwood, *Prisioners Prayers*, (London, 1628), pp. 1-9, 67, 77, 80, 83, 92, 99, 138, 153

⁴⁵ J. Rogers, *The Doctrine of Faith*, (London, 1629), p. 58

helping of the ignorant in the performance of this Christian duty) to expound the prayers of our Lord, being the perfect ground for all prayers; so that we praying in wisdom, may pray with comfort'.⁴⁶ Greenwood wrote that the Lord's Prayer was valuable not only in its own right but also because it served as a guide to all other prayers: 'Christ gave [the apostles] this prayer, not only to use the proscript forme thereof, but also to frame all their prayers suitable to the same'.⁴⁷ Another virtue of the prayer was its brevity: 'It pleased Christ in his wisdom to make it briefe and short for these reasons: 1. That it might be sooner learnt and better kept. 2. That it might be often repeated and never wearisome. 3. That it might take away all excuse from those, that in any respect neglected prayer.'⁴⁸ Greenwood did not feel, though, that the prayer was self explanatory. So, dealing with a few words at a time, he described in full the meaning and implications of each phrase. As part of this analysis, Greenwood was careful to state that the prayer would only prove effective if made by an individual living a committed, Christian life.⁴⁹ Finally, he advised his readers to pray faithfully and fervently, to 'pour out [their] hearts before God' and to pray 'with zeal and entire devotion of the soul'.⁵⁰

If there was one day on which prayer was especially necessary, it was Sunday. Greenwood had very strict ideas about the way in which Sunday, or the Sabbath as he preferred to call it, should be commemorated. In *A Treatise on the Great and Generall Day of Judgement* (1606) and again in *Tormenting Tophet* (1618) Greenwood commented: 'It hath beene, is and ever will be, the fond nature of man, to imagine a sinne a great deale lesser than indeed it is ... A man would thinke a poor man had committed but a small sinne, in gathering chips (of meer necessity) on the Sabbath Day; yet he was stoned by the law for his labour'.⁵¹ In this quotation,

⁴⁶ Greenwood, *A True and Conformable Exposition of the Lord's Prayer* in *Workes*, p. 85

⁴⁷ *ibid*, p. 86

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 86-87

⁴⁹ *ibid*, pp. 87-117

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 122

⁵¹ Greenwood, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement* in *Workes*, p. 26-27 and Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet* in *Workes*, p. 310

Greenwood implies that it was not acceptable to perform any non-religious exercises on a Sunday. He made the same point more unequivocally in 1628: ‘O eternal God ... seeing thou hast put a principall charge upon thy fourth commandment, remember to keep holy the Sabbath day: O my God, grant me thy feare, thy grace, that thy day may never bee neglected of me. Lord, grant that I may spend it in prayer publike and private, in hearing and reading thy holy word, in instructing my family. Lord vouchsafe me to a great[er] care, so heavenly a desire, as I may not therein speake my own words, nor think mine own thoughts, and that I may exercise on that day my joy, my soul’s delight ... Grant that I may deal with no worldly thing that day, that I may go to thy temple, and return to my house, and make no other walk on this day, that I may not do or look upon any vaine pastimes on this thy day’.⁵² It might be thought that Greenwood was only one of many Essex Puritans to express sabbatarian sentiments in print for, although sabbatarianism was not the exclusive preserve of Puritans, it was a doctrine they tended to support.⁵³ In fact, only John Stalham provided written evidence of support for this view but many others must have agreed with his sentiments. Stalham instructed his catechumens to ‘keepe [the Sabbath day] holy’ by ‘holy use of all God’s ordinances, abstaining from common thoughts, words and works, and vaine sports’.⁵⁴

The most holy act a Christian could undertake on a Sunday was the receiving of communion and, bearing this in mind, Greenwood urged communicants to ensure that they were properly prepared for this ritual. Specifically, he suggested that they make the following prayer ‘for preparation to the sacrament’: ‘prepare my heart that I may receive the same holy and heavenly ordinance to my comfort not condemnation for whosoever eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own condemnation ... grant that I may never come to the holy table without ... holy and due preparation ... grant that I may come with humiliation of soul ... sound repentance ...

⁵² Greenwood, *Prisioners Prayers*, pp. 56-57

⁵³ Parker, pp. 6, 178, 241

⁵⁴ Stalham, *Catechisme*, p. 14

[and] love to my brethren.’⁵⁵ This was a plea with which nearly all members of the Church of England, whether conformist, Laudian or Puritan, could have agreed. Nehemiah Rogers, for example, encouraged people to receive communion only if their hearts and consciences were clear because the consequences of doing otherwise were dire.⁵⁶ The Puritan Daniel Rogers, though he disagreed with his kinsman on many other religious issues, made a similar point: ‘sacramentall preparation and triall, is a duty required by God, at the hands of all and every that desire to receive worthily, by the due exercise therefore a man may discerne whether or no he be qualified to receive; and accordingly either proceede to communicate with comfort, or else desist for the present, till better prepared.’⁵⁷

For those unable or unwilling to prepare properly for the sacrament, keep the Sabbath holy, pray faithfully and, more generally, lead Christian lives, Greenwood provided no comfort. He warned all those whose faith was not genuine and strong that they were in danger of spending eternity in Hell. Furthermore, in characteristic Puritan fashion, he described the torments of Hell at some length. His aim in so doing was ‘to breake the hardest heart and cause it to quake and tremble’ and, for that reason, his descriptions are graphic: ‘Hell is the most lamentable and woful place of torment where (in regard of the extremity of torment imposed upon the damned) there shall be screeching and screaming, weeping, wayling and gnashing of teeth for evermore ... where torment shall be upon torment, each torment [c]easeless, endless, remediless, where the worme shall be immortal, cold, intolerable, st[e]nch indurable, fire unquenchable, darkness palpable, scourges of the devills terrible and screeching and screecing [continual] ... there is howling and horror, sobbing and terror, where weeping helps not, and repentance boots not, where pain is killing, worme gnawing and fire consuming’.⁵⁸ Greenwood added that the fires of Hell were not, as Calvin

⁵⁵ Greenwood, *Prisioners Prayers*, pp. 148-152

⁵⁶ Rogers, *Strange Vineyard*, p. 164; Rogers, ‘Watchfull Shepheard’ in *True Convert*, p. 75

⁵⁷ D. Rogers, *The Second Part of the Treatise of the Sacraments*, (London, 1633), p. 2

⁵⁸ Greenwood, *Tormenting Tophet* in *Workes*, pp. 230, 239-240

thought, allegorical but real.⁵⁹ Furthermore, they would consume the majority of mankind: 'It may seem ... that many shall be saved, and not such a multitude damned. I answer: that though the number of the elect be great, by it selfe considered ... yet if it be compared to the number of those that shall glorifie God's justice in hell: Alas then a remnant of Israel shall be saved, they are but a handfull, and therefore hell must be exceeding large'.⁶⁰

The existence of Hell not merely to punish the wicked but also to demonstrate to the righteous that God was just, was a point which Greenwood made on more than one occasion, but he emphasised that God's justice would be most visible at the second coming of Christ when: 'All men none excepted, of every age, of every sex and of every nation, rich and poore, princes and common people, noble and ignoble, all that have been from the beginning of the world, and shall be at the end of the same, shall appear before Christ's judgement seat'.⁶¹ At that time, Greenwood wrote: 'we must give an account of our temporall goods, how we have gotten them, whether justly or unjustly, how we have spent them, whether we have cloathed the naked with them, or whether we have made the cloathed naked for them, how we have disposed them, lest there be any debate after we be gone ... We must all give an account of the time wherein we live, our severall vocations, how we have employed ourselves in the same. The prince must give an account how he hath governed his kingdome ... whether ... mildly, lovingly, carefully trained his subjects up in the worship of God, or ... cruelly oppressed them ... ministers of the word of God ... must give an account how they have behaved themselves in their ministry: whether they have preached Christ for Christ, that is, for the conversion of sinners to Christ, or (as hirelings) for lucre and gaine of worldly trash, whether they have fed their flocks carefully ... The householder [must give an account of] how he hath governed his family: whether in reading holy scripture, and prayer. to the praise and glory of God, or in reading foolish

⁵⁹ *ibid*, p. 284

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 280

⁶¹ *ibid*, pp. 251, 4

fables, in gaming, dicing, playing, swearing and such like'.⁶² Each person should seek to demonstrate, in other words, that in their lifetime they had behaved honestly, and fulfilled their responsibilities towards their fellow men and God. On the basis of each testimony God would 'execute just judgement' as a result of which 'the wicked shall be cast into everlasting fire and the godly ... [carried into] the highest heaven'.⁶³

This 'just judgement' could not override God's initial decision about a person's soul; it did, however, confirm and reinforce God's original choice for the individual of election or reprobation, as, in a lesser but still significant way, Greenwood argued, did the whole of a person's life.⁶⁴ Thus baptism was important because it was the ceremony by which the Christian was received into the church and set upon the godly path to heaven. Greenwood's views on baptism were not entirely unorthodox. He believed, for example, that baptism was 'a remedy against original sin'.⁶⁵ Puritans tended to argue this because the authority for it was one of the least ambiguous passages in the Bible, the line in Acts in which people were called to 'repent ... and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out'.⁶⁶ It is no surprise therefore that three of Greenwood's fellow Puritans in Essex defended this interpretation of baptism in print. John Stalham, the minister at Terling believed that baptism 'signified and sealed ... that spirtual washing and cleansing of [the] soule from sinne, which in his covenant God hath most freely promised'.⁶⁷ Daniel Rogers reasoned that baptism 'is the creating instrument of God to produce and forme the Lord Jesus to a new creature, and to [form] regeneration in the soule'. He added that baptism was ordained 'to kill the poyson of sin'.⁶⁸ Stephen Marshall of Finchingfield also argued that at baptism God promised 'remission of sinnes', although he

⁶² Greenwood, *A Treastise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement* in *Workes* pp. 28-29, 31-32

⁶³ *ibid*, pp. 9, 66

⁶⁴ *ibid*, pp. 64- 67

⁶⁵ Greenwood, *The Race Celestial* in *Workes*, pp. 133, 381

⁶⁶ *King James Bible*, Acts 3:19. The idea was taken too from Acts 2:38: 'be baptised ... for the remission of sins'.

⁶⁷ J. Stalham, *C'atechisme* p. 9

⁶⁸ D. Rogers, *A Treatise of the Two Sacraments of the Gospell: Baptisme and the Supper of the Lord*, (London, 1633), pp. 71, 74

cautioned that: ‘gospell promises are promises; and sacramentall seales are seales [but] they [can] be refused or hypocritically received’. Therefore, it did not automatically follow, Marshall argued that those who were baptised would achieve glory.⁶⁹

Greenwood too had ideas about the efficacy of baptism as he showed in warning: ‘they that bring not their children to baptism ... shut them out of the kingdom of heaven’, but he added that ‘it [is] not [the case that] outward baptism simply save[s] us or without it no salvation can be ... neither are they cast away that cannot come to be baptised in water’.⁷⁰ Thus Greenwood informed parents that if they did not bring their children to the church to be baptised they were preventing them from receiving the saving grace from God which would cleanse them of their sins but he also reassured those whose babies died before baptism was possible that their infants would not automatically go to Hell. These two positions can be reconciled because in the first instance Greenwood was speaking to those who had wilfully failed to bring their children to baptism and in the second he was addressing himself to those who had had insufficient time to bring their infants to baptism. To expand, baptism could not be deliberately ignored as the ceremony played a crucial part in the life of a Christian. Even Christ, as Greenwood pointed out, had not neglected to partake in the ceremony. His baptism was, inevitably, without parallel and Greenwood believed it important to outline the ‘especial causes for which Christ vouchsafed to be baptised’. They were: ‘to fulfil the righteousness of law and gospel’; ‘to confirm the baptism of John’; ‘to sanctifie the water to his mystical end, viz, the washing away of sin’; ‘to show his wonderful humility’; ‘to show that baptism was not lightly to be respected nor of any neglected’; ‘to testifie to the blessed communion and fellowship’ and, most importantly, ‘to signify to all the world that he came to be baptised with the baptism of death, that the truth may answer in

⁶⁹ Stephen Marshall quoted in, T. Blake, *Infants Baptisme Freed from Antichristianisme*, (London, 1645), p. 104

⁷⁰ Greenwood, *A Joyful Tractate in Workes*, pp. 383, 392

every respect, type and figure'.⁷¹ Other baptisms were of less wide ranging significance than Christ's but remained important. This was chiefly because at the moment when the minister administered the water to the forehead, the holy spirit 'wash[ed] away the filth ... from the soul'. The additional positive effects worked by the holy spirit at baptism were described thus by Greenwood: '[it] makes us fruitful in good works ... [it] refresheth us in the fierce and greatest heat of tribulations ... [it] quench[es] our thirst of temporal things'.⁷² To sum up, baptism permitted and helped individuals to live and grow as Christians. This did not proclude, however, the salvation of those who died too early to receive baptism. 'It is not their fault', Greenwood said and, quoting from Ezekial, added: 'they shal not be damned for their fathers' offence'. Nor did it imply that all who were baptised would be saved, for the ceremony was, of course, effective only for the elect.⁷³ These ideas were expressed more clearly by Cornelius Burges, who wrote in his 1629 publication *Baptismall Regeneration of Elect Infants*: 'all elect infants, doe ordinarily, in baptisme, receive the spirit of Christ, to seaze upon them for Christ, and to be in them as the roote and first principall of regeneration, and future newnesse of life. This I speake ... with reference only unto such infants as dye not in infancy, but live to years of discretion, and then come to be effectually called, and actually converted by the ordinary meanes of the word applied by the same spirit unto them, when and how hee pleaseth. As for the rest of the elect who dye infants, I will not deny a further worke, sometimes in, sometimes before baptisme, to fit them for heaven.' Burges clarified this last point a few pages later: 'some infants ... doe receive the spirit to unite them unto Christ before baptisme.'⁷⁴

Clearly none of this detracted from the sanctity of baptism, which was Greenwood lamented, too often forgotten: 'I see this heavenly sacrament seldome

⁷¹ *ibid.*, pp. 381-384

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 387

⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 393

⁷⁴ C. Burges, *Baptismall Regeneration of Elect Infants Professed by the Church of England, According to the Scriptures, the Primitive Church, the Present Reformed Churches, and Many Particular Divines Apart*, (London, 1629), pp. 3. 19

made right use of, the most contenting themselves with the bare signe, very few acquainting themselves with the blessed power of the signified'.⁷⁵ It was common for Puritans to criticise those more concerned with the ceremonial that surrounded baptism than the true meaning of the sacrament. Generally, at the root of their complaints was an antipathy towards the use of the sign of the cross, a symbol that was very unpopular with some Essex Puritans. John Stalham, whose curate at Terling, Nathaniel Bosse, baptised children without using the sign of the cross, stated clearly in his *Catechisme for Children in Yeares and Children in Understanding* that he felt that only baptism by sprinkling or dipping was acceptable.⁷⁶ Several of Richard Drake's parishioners at Radwinter demonstrated that they too shared a hatred of the sign of the cross by refusing to allow their children to be thus baptised.⁷⁷ John Beadle, rector of Barnston, baptised his own child without using the sign of the cross because he found the ceremony 'offensive', whilst John Hawkesby of Earls Colne baptised one of the Harlackenden children without using the sign of the cross.⁷⁸ Edmund Brewer of Castle Hedingham was another Essex clergymen prepared to baptise without using the sign of the cross.⁷⁹ Were Greenwood's reservations about the emphasis placed on the ceremony that surrounded baptism also motivated by a dislike of the use of the sign of the cross? Certainly, in *A Joyful Tractate or The Most Blessed Baptism* (1616) he, by implication, rejected the sign of the cross in baptism: 'So that water ... is the element that John useth in baptisme ... pure, simple and common water ... to signify the right [the baptised] have to the heavenly Canaan: not chrisme or holy oile for annointing the brest and forehead, to signify the annointing of the spirit: not burning lights, to signifie their delivery from darkness into light ... Musculus saith, that ... certaine Christians of India baptize their children ... in fire and

⁷⁵ Greewood, *A Joyful Tractate in Workes*, p. 371

⁷⁶ Stalham, *Catechisme*, p. 9

⁷⁷ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 44v-r

⁷⁸ Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 199-200; J. Beadle, *The Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian*, (London, 1656), p. 45; PRO SP 16/339, f. 123r

⁷⁹ PRO SP 16/339, f. 123r

water also ... branding them on the forehead with the sign of the cross ... this is horrible and hard ... because cursed is he that addeth or diminisheth from the word of the Lord. An horrible thing that wee should make ourselves wiser than Christ: what Christ hath commanded to be used in the sacrament, that in the fear of God let us doe; adding nothing to the same, for that is abomination.’⁸⁰ But perhaps Greenwood was not as fiercely opposed to the use of the sign of the cross as some of his Puritan colleagues in Essex for in *Marks and No Marks* he acknowledged only that he had previously held ‘doubts’ about that ceremony. In addition, it should be noted that Greenwood was never prosecuted for failing to use of the sign of the cross. That he felt more strongly than this evidence implies cannot, though, be discounted. Greenwood never admitted to anything more than ‘doubts’ about the surplice yet other evidence demonstrates that he felt sufficiently opposed to the use of that garment to refuse to wear it during his ministry. When he expressed ‘doubts’ about the use of the sign of the cross, Greenwood may similarly have been understating the depth of his feelings.⁸¹

It is appropriate at this point to expand a little upon Greenwood’s dislike of the surplice. In refusing to wear the surplice Greenwood was allying himself with a number of other nonconformists in Essex, for example, Edmund Brewer of Castle Hedingham, Nathaniel Bosse, curate at Terling, John Morse of Romford, and Thomas Witham of Mistley cum Manningtree.⁸² Greenwood’s justification for not wearing the surplice, ‘its base use in Rome’, is a more definite indicator of his nonconformity than his simple failure to wear the garment, for the complaint he made was one regularly expressed by those who wanted to achieve the abolition of the surplice in the Church of England. Unusually for a Puritan, though, Greenwood did not repeat the complaint that the surplice lacked scriptural warrant.⁸³

⁸⁰ Greenwood, *A Joyful Tractate*, in *Workes*, pp. 389-390

⁸¹ Greenwood, *Marks*, p. 18; ERO D’ACA 48, f. 160v

⁸² PRO SP 16/339, f. 123r; ERO D’ACA 48, f. 13v, 29v, 202v

⁸³ Greenwood, *Marks*, p. 16; Collinson, *English Puritanism*, p. 15

Greenwood wrote little more about preaching than he did about the surplice but there is no doubt that he considered the former to be a vital aspect of his ministry. He always referred to himself not as a pastor, rector or vicar but as a ‘preacher of the word’.⁸⁴ This indicates that he saw preaching as his primary function. His published works lead the historian to the same conclusion. Most of Greenwood’s published pieces are detailed, uncompromising and often complex analyses of biblical passages; if these are representative of his style in the pulpit, his preaching must have been typically Puritan. Furthermore, it is likely that Greenwood considered the sermon to be the most important part of public worship for he had an exalted view of preachers: ‘The least minister of the gospell of Christ can give greater report of Christ than John[the Baptist]: [ministers of the gospel] are said to be greater than John not for grace, but for our testimony of the Lord Jesus: John indeed pointed out Christ to the people ... but he could not say (as we can say) that Christ dyed, rose again, ascended and took possession of heaven for his elect.’⁸⁵ This passage is striking because of the assertion that even a preacher with minimal talent had great worth and value, for how much more must Greenwood have esteemed a very gifted preacher.

Greenwood’s views on preaching seem to have remained unchanged throughout his ministry. At least, there is no evidence to suggest that he ever altered his opinions on this subject, or on the questions of double and unconditional predestination, experimental predestinarianism, the value of set prayer, the sanctity of the Sabbath and the significance of the sacraments. However, towards the end of his life, Greenwood changed his opinions both on the use of the cross and on the use of the surplice. What precisely caused Greenwood’s shift is not known, for he credited no individual or experience with his ‘conversion’. He noted simply: ‘I once doubted myself about the crosse and the surplice but the main thing that troubled me was their base use in Rome: but considering how they are offered to use in England, I rectified

⁸⁴ Greenwood, *Blessed’st Birth*, title page; Greenwood, *The Jaylers Jayle Delivery*, title page, Greenwood, *Marks*, title page

⁸⁵ Greenwood, *Marks*, p. 16

mine ill opinion of them.’ In addition, Greenwood provided a short justification for each ceremony. ‘The crosse’, he wrote, ‘is used to distinguish us from the infidels that deride us, for depending on Christ crucified for salvation.’ Of the surplice he said: ‘[it] is used as a garment of decency in the ministry of the word ... it is true that the surplice as it is used idolatrously in Rome, is a garment defiled with flesh ... but ... the superstitious use is taken away in England.’⁸⁶ Greenwood stressed, though, that above all these ceremonies remained ‘things indifferent’, actions neither ‘commanded nor prohibited by God’s law’.⁸⁷ In so saying he was echoing the traditional Church of England position as stated in the 1559 Book of Common Prayer: ‘Christ’s gospel is not a ceremonial law ... but it is a religion to serve God ... in freedom of spirit, being content only with those ceremonies which do serve to a decent order and godly discipline ... [Ceremonies] may be altered and changed and therefore are not to be esteemed equal to God’s law.’⁸⁸

The same logic and reasoning was applied by the Church of England to the communion ceremony and by 1630 Greenwood had accepted their interpretation: ‘the kingdom of Heaven stands not upon things indifferent ... as the bread of the sacrament whither leavened or unleavened; as the gestures of the sacrament, whither sitting, standing, kneeling ... things indifferent ... are of no necessity to the service of God or to the salvation of our souls’.⁸⁹ Greenwood continued: ‘man does not please God because he eat fish rather than flesh, or drink beere rather than ale: or that sitteth at the sacrament rather than kneele ... [that] these things forementioned are indifferent is plain, for they are neither commanded nor prohibited by the word of God, neither are these in their own nature good or evil ... they are neither with the word nor against the word but besides the word ... they may be done and God pleased, and they may not be done and God pleased.’⁹⁰ Even though Greenwood did not advocate that any be

⁸⁶ Greenwood, *Marks*, pp. 14, 15, 18

⁸⁷ *ibid*, pp. 9-10

⁸⁸ J. E. Booty (ed) *The Book of Common Prayer 1559: The Elizabethan Prayer Book*, (Washington, 1976), pp. 19-20

⁸⁹ Greenwood, *Marks*, pp. 4-5

⁹⁰ *ibid*, pp. 8-10

compelled to conform, his line of argument would have been challenged by many of the nonconformists with whom he had once allied himself. It was a commonplace amongst nonconformists that ‘gestures of the sacrament’ far from being indifferent were critical. They tended to be not only vehemently opposed to kneeling but, more importantly, proponents of sitting at communion. Although no Essex nonconformist revealed an anti-kneeling, pro-sitting attitude in his writings, two ministers in that county, John Fenner of Rochford and Samuel Borphet of High Laver indicated their preference by giving holy communion to seated recipients. The ten communicants from Rochford and High Laver who sat must too have been of the opinion that that was the only acceptable posture.⁹¹ In all probability there were many other clergymen and lay people in Essex who favoured sitting at the sacrament, although no record of such opinions or actions has survived. Indeed, if evidence from the diocese of Chester, an area which is well documented, is representative, most Essex Puritans would have rejected kneeling and argued for sitting. Humphrey Tylecote the curate at Stretford in Lancashire sat to receive holy communion in 1622, William Thompson, curate at Newton did likewise in 1633. Their fellow ministers at Shotwick, Great Budworth and Middlewich administered communion to those seated in 1616, 1619 and 1622 respectively.⁹² Furthermore, Thomas Morton, bishop of Chester was sufficiently concerned about the extent of opposition to kneeling in his diocese to try to tackle the problem through reasoned debate. Morton encouraged nonconformists in his diocese to write to him outlining their objections to kneeling, he then published these objections along with his responses to them. Several of the arguments advanced by the nonconformists against kneeling are a simultaneous attempt to vindicate the use of sitting. They wrote for example that sitting should be favoured over kneeling because Christ had sat at the first communion. The nonconformists further conjectured that: ‘Christ ordained this for a banquet, whereat we are to act the part of the guests of Christ; in imitation to resemble our coheire-ship with him in his

⁹¹ ERO D/AEA 38, f. 6r, 45r, D/AEA 41, f. 183v-r

⁹² R. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North West England*, (Manchester, 1972), pp. 31-32

kingdom: now it suteth not with a coheire or a guest ... to kneel at the table, and it is contrary to the law of nature, to kneel at a banquet, which is a gesture of inferioritie. and abasement: and we may not lose our fellowship with Christ to sit thereat, whereby Christ would represent unto us our banquet in heaven.' The final argument made in favour of sitting was: 'The disposition of heart, which is required of us, in our very act of receiving, is not so much humility, as assurance of faith and cheerfulness, which is much better expressed and shewed by the gesture of sitting, than of kneeling'.⁹³

Greenwood was familiar with the arguments of the nonconformists and the responses they generated from those in favour of kneeling. He summarised the two positions as follows: 'Amongst us, he that sitteth will censure him that kneeleth, as idolatrous and he that kneeleth, censures him that sitteth as superstitious'.⁹⁴ At first, Greenwood's reply to both groups seems to be the same, a plea for greater tolerance: 'it is the intent of the doer [and not the action] that makes good or naught what is done'. In any case, he added, 'Christians should have a more charitable opinion one of another'. However, when Greenwood embarked upon the self-appointed task of 'making peace' between the two sides it quickly emerged that he was not an impartial observer of the debate but one who favoured kneeling over sitting. Indeed, Greenwood showed no patience with those who wished to sit at communion. 'Who says they were sitting at the last supper?', he asked. Greenwood pointed out that just prior to receiving the bread and wine Jesus and the disciples had been praying he suggested therefore that they may still have been kneeling when they took the first holy communion. Even if Christ and his disciples had sat, Greenwood continued, it did not necessarily follow that Christians today should assume that posture. After all, he argued, Jews removed their shoes at Passover and Jesus would therefore have worn no shoes at the Last Supper but no one suggested that communicants should go

⁹³ T. Morton, *A Defence of the Innocency of the Three Ceremonies of the Church of England*, (London, 1619), pp. 244, 251, 258

⁹⁴ Greenwood, *A Treatise of the Great and Generall Day of Judgement in Workes*, pp. 11-12

barefoot. Of equal relevance in Greenwood's mind was the fact that those in favour of sitting did not believe that it was necessary to receive the sacrament, as Jesus had, in the evening. If it was not necessary to follow Christ in these last two particulars why, Greenwood asked, was it essential to sit?

This was, for Greenwood, a rhetorical question. Sitting was not even the preferable posture, that honour fell to kneeling, which Greenwood justified thus: 'kneeling is', he wrote, 'most wickedly abused in the Church of Rome, but in our English church there is no such use or end of kneeling ... wee kneele not to the bread ... we do testify our humble and hearty thanksgiving to the Lord for our redemption in Christ Jesus ... I hold no gesture more laudable in the solemn service of God than this'.⁹⁵ He continued: 'People say we should not kneel because the papists do but ... the abuse of a thing takes not away the use of the thing ... People say that the supper of the Lord is a banquet and we sit at banquets we do not kneel ... [I] answer ... the sacrament is no corporall banquet to fill the belly ... but it is a banquet for the soule's refreshing ... therefore the gesture of kneeling is suitable'.⁹⁶

So, Greenwood did not, as he made clear, favour kneeling because of any Biblical precedent. He stressed that: 'Christ taught in his last supper what to doe, not when to do neither in what manner'. Greenwood concluded: 'this item I give God's children, that they make not gestures at the sacrament materials of the sacrament, but mere circumstances, and the sacrament may be done without them, let that be submitted to: where the church appoints standing, let standing stand, where sitting let sitting be, and where kneeling is required let everyone embrace it'.⁹⁷ In other words, in the Church of England kneeling was to be preferred also because it was the posture required by law.

Greenwood, therefore, in what were almost his last printed words, urged conformity to the established church. He encouraged others to obey as one who had

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 17

⁹⁶ *ibid.* pp. 21-22

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 23

himself very recently flaunted the laws and customs of the church but now realised that peace, order and obedience should be sought above all. Can any light be thrown on Greenwood's transformation from radical Puritan to conformist? First and most importantly the idea that Greenwood underwent a false conversion can be dismissed. If his change of heart was not genuine, Greenwood would not have announced it so publicly, nor tried to encourage others to follow his example. There is no evidence either that Greenwood was in any way pressured to write his conformist tract *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven*. The reasons why Greenwood changed his mind remain obscure. Perhaps in his eighties he had simply become tired of the struggles and arguments caused by nonconformity and decided to embrace conformity as the more peaceful option. He did, after all, clearly state that it was his hope to achieve peace in the Church of England over ceremonial issues.⁹⁸ Greenwood would not have sacrificed his principles to achieve peace, though; his attachment to conformity and his wish for peace must have been equally strong. In other words, Greenwood, once a convinced nonconformist had become a convinced conformist.

It was relatively unusual for a clergyman to move from a nonconformist to a conformist position, especially when behind the change lay real conviction. For *Marks and No Marks of the Kingdom of Heaven* was not written with the same purpose in mind as John Sprint's *Cassander Anglicanus*. Sprint did not believe that conformity was inherently right, rather he thought it undesirable for Puritans to be deprived for refusing to conform. Greenwood, on the other hand, became entirely convinced that conformity was to be encouraged for its own sake.⁹⁹ Thus, although Greenwood's Puritanism, as characterised by his Calvinist theology, his experimental predestinarianism, his emphasis on preaching and his sabbatarianism, seems to have been intact at the end of his life he was, without doubt, a repentant nonconformist.

⁹⁸ *ibid*, sig. A4v

⁹⁹ J. Sprint, *Cassander Anglicanus*, (London, 1618)

CHAPTER FOUR: NEHEMIAH ROGERS: A LIFE OF TRUE CONVERSIONS?

Nehemiah Rogers was the second son of Vincent Rogers, pastor of Stratford-le-Bow in Middlesex, and his wife Dorcas. He was baptised at the church at Stratford-le-Bow on October 20th 1593 and from the age of nine educated at Merchant Taylors' School.¹ From there Rogers moved to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, matriculating in 1613, gaining his BA in 1614 and his MA in 1618. His college was a well known centre of Puritanism with strong links to the county of Essex, for it had been established by the Essex gentleman Sir Walter Mildmay in 1584 and had, since that time, educated a notable proportion of Essex Puritans. Rogers almost certainly formed relationships with Puritans as a result of the time he spent at Emmanuel and must have made other contacts after becoming a fellow at Jesus College, Cambridge²

After leaving university, Rogers served as lecturer at St. Margaret's New Fish Street, London. The rector there was Thomas Wood, of whom nothing can be discovered save that he held the living from 1616 until his death in 1640. The parish, though, is less obscure. St. Margaret's New Fish Street was a Puritan stronghold from the 1570s onwards and home to a succession of godly lecturers, including James Stile, Robert Crowley and Sydrach Simpson.³ Rogers is not out of place in this list for his first two books, *The True Convert* (1620), *Christian Curtesie* (1621), were Calvinist rather than Puritan tracts and his third publication, *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* (1623), demonstrates that at this stage in his life Rogers was a moderate Puritan. Rogers did not, however, stay at St. Margaret's; he left shortly before the publication of his first book, which he dedicated to the rector, churchwardens and parishioners of St. Margaret's, to take up the position of vicar at All Saints', Messing.

¹ DNB sub Rogers, Nehemiah; C. J. Robinson, (ed), *A Register of the Scholars Admitted into Merchant Taylors' School From A.D. 1562 to 1874*, Volume I, (Lewes, 1882), p. 45

² Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 15-23; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 11, 15, 28, 40, 133. It is not clear exactly when Rogers became a fellow at Jesus College.

³ P. S. Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: The Politics of Dissent 1560-1662*, (Stanford, USA, 1970), pp. 134, 150, 207, 281

Rogers stayed at Messing until 1640 and seems to have enjoyed a relatively untroubled ministry in the village. At least, Messing appears relatively infrequently in the archdeaconry court records. Only a handful of parishioners were presented for failing to receive communion or for absenting themselves from their parish church.⁴ All those who were presented for these offences found themselves before the courts prior to the railing in of the communion table in 1637, but their motives remain obscure. As do those of Thomas Baker, who was accused in July 1625 of refusing to pay towards the repair of the parish church, and those of Robert Labor, Edward Labor, John Tillot and Thomas Pilson, who were all presented for the same offence ten years later, although it cannot be ruled out that they were prompted by nonconformity.⁵ If the nonconformity of the aforementioned men is a possibility, then that of others is a probability. For example, the man whom Rogers himself presented in November 1627 for disrupting a service and leaving the church when the sacrament was being given is extremely likely to have been a nonconformist.⁶ Samuel Wigley, the individual who went so far as to threaten to defile the surplice if he was questioned over his refusal to receive the communion at Easter 1637, must have been a nonconformist too.⁷ Thomas Creshoell, on the other hand, was probably a separatist for in 1637 he not only refused to attend his parish church but also stood outside the church catechising during divine service.⁸ The archdeaconry court records are silent on the question of whether anyone chose to listen to Creshoell rather than attend Rogers' services but it is possible that other parishioners chose to listen to the catechising rather than to the sermons and services of their minister.

It will have been noted that the final two recorded incidents dating from Rogers' years at Messing were both in 1637. However, it should not be thought that opposition to Rogers escalated in the late 1630s; in fact, Rogers seems to have faced

⁴ ERO D/ACA 45, ff. 38r, 168r, D/ACA 47, f. 34v, D/ACA 49, f. 229v, D/ACA 50, ff. 111v, 212r, D/ACA 51, f. 58v, D/ACA 54, ff. 22v, 35r

⁵ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 38r, D/ACA 50, f. 111r,

⁶ ERO D/ACA 46, f. 16r

⁷ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 58v

⁸ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 187v.

more opposition in the 1620s than at any point during the 1630s. This is interesting because *A Sermon Preached at the ... Visitation of ... William, Lord Bishop of London* (1631), the second edition of *The True Convert* (1632) and *Mirroure of Mercy* (1640) demonstrate that although Rogers was still a Calvinist between 1631 and 1640, he did not reaffirm his Puritanism during that decade. Moreover, Rogers was not simply a Prayer Book Protestant during the 1630s; for although he procrastinated over railing in the altar at Messing, he respected William Laud and numbered the Laudians William, Lord Maynard and Robert Aylett amongst his patrons.⁹

In 1640 Rogers resigned the living of Messing and became rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate in London. He was sequestered from that living in 1643 for 'preaching against arming to fight the king', a charge he did not deny.¹⁰ After his sequestration, Rogers returned to Essex or more specifically to the house of Thomas and Dorothy Roberts in Little Braxted. There he received, in his own words, 'light, lodging and firing'.¹¹ He left Little Braxted in 1650 to become pastor to a congregation at St. Osyth in Essex, a position he obtained by leave of Mary Savage, Countess Rivers.¹² The precise nature of Rogers' role at St. Osyth is unclear but since he did not, as a sequestered minister have the right to preach, his duties were presumably primarily pastoral. Rogers cannot have been entirely satisfied with his new post, for in 1656 he asked the council for permission to preach. Thanks to the support of Edward Herries of Great Baddow, Major General of Essex, Rogers' request was granted and in 1656 he was able to become vicar of Doddinghurst in Essex, the living of which was in the gift of Thomas Roberts.¹³ Whilst at Doddinghurst, Rogers published his first books for several years: *The Fast Friend*

⁹ Laud, *Works, DD, Volume VII: Letters*, (Oxford, 1975), p. 242; N. Rogers, *The True Convert or the Exposition upon the XV Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel*, (London, 1632), sig. A2; N. Rogers, 'The Good Samaritan or an Exposition on that Parable Luke X Verse XXX-XXXVIII' in *Mirroure of Mercy and that on God's Part and Man's*, (London, 1640), sig. A2

¹⁰ Matthews, p. 56

¹¹ N. Rogers, *The Figg-Less Figg Tree or the Doome of a Barren and Unfruitful Profession Lay'd Open*, (London, 1658), sig. A2

¹² Matthews, p. 56

¹³ *C.S.P.D 1656-1657, Volume CXXX*, ed. M. A. Everett Green, (London, 1883), pp. 50-52

(1658) and *The Figg-Less Figg Tree* (1658). Rogers died at Doddinghurst in 1660, two years before his final book, *The Rich Fool*, was published. These three books were produced during a new stage of Rogers' life and they mark a last, and surprising, shift in Rogers' thinking for *The Fast Friend* and *The Rich Fool*, in particular, are Arminian tracts.

For the purposes of analysis it makes sense to examine each of the three phases in Rogers' career separately. The chapter is, therefore, divided into three sections. The first section focuses on the moderate Puritanism of Rogers' early years; the second section explores Rogers' views from 1631 to 1640, over which period of time he remained faithful to Calvinism but came to tolerate, if not accept, Laudianism; the third section examines the Arminianism of Rogers' last years.

During his time as a moderate Puritan Rogers published three works: *The True Convert* in 1620, *Christian Curtesie* in 1621 and *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* in 1622. The first two of these books were licensed by the Calvinist Daniel Featley, chaplain to Archbishop George Abbot, and the third by Bishop George Montaigne's chaplain Thomas Worrall.¹⁴ By the mid 1620s Montaigne's licensing policy displayed Arminian sympathies and Worrall was responsible for licensing Richard Montagu's Arminian treatise of 1625, *Appello Caesarem*, but *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* is, like *The True Convert* and *Christian Curtesie*, a Calvinist work.¹⁵

The True Convert is a fairly standard Calvinist exposition of the parable of the prodigal son; the prodigal son is portrayed as a member of the elect who has temporarily wandered from the path of salvation. Rogers emphasised that God would inevitably return the elect to his fold because he holds a 'special love' for them, even before they are called.¹⁶ In other words, Rogers believed that the elect could fall temporarily, but not totally and finally, from grace. For the reprobate, on the other

¹⁴ E. Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1640, Volume III*, (London, 1876), pp. 19, 48, 307.

¹⁵ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 101, 114, 119, 166

¹⁶ N. Rogers, *The True Convert or the Exposition upon the Whole Parable of the Prodigall*, (London, 1620), *passim* and p. 240

hand, Rogers held out no hope. They were ‘of old ordained to condemnation’ and God’s desertion of them was ‘eternall’.¹⁷

Rogers added little in *Christian Curtesie* to his existing words on the elect and the reprobate. Indeed, the latter group were not mentioned at all and the former group merited only a passing reference. Rogers referred in his dedication to Lady Margaret Chibborne, his patron at Messing, being ‘of the elect’, a distinction which gave her ‘more cause to boast than of any outward honour whatsoever.’ However, it is clear that Rogers did not wish to encourage his patron to complacency: ‘Go on madam, in your godly course and while others strive to settle their lands, secure their monies, confirm their estates (leaving their salvation unwrought up) let it be your principal endeavour, to conform your life still more and more to the rule of God’s most holy word and make your salvation sure unto yourself.’¹⁸ In this passage, which echoes Henry Greenwood’s call to the elect to ‘in fear of God ... make sure your election’,¹⁹ Rogers sounds like an experimental predestinarian. It would be wrong to argue that experimental predestinarianism was an exclusively Puritan theology, for it had the support also of non-Puritans such as Archbishop George Abbott and Archbishop Toby Matthew.²⁰ But certainly a belief in experimental predestinarianism was a commonplace among Puritans, so it is no surprise that in 1621 Rogers seems to have believed that Christians should seek for assurance that they were among the number of the elect. It is not, however, possible to be sure for how long he believed this because he made no similar statements in his other works.

Rogers did, though, return to the wider questions of salvation and reprobation. In *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* he assured the elect, as he had in *The True Convert*, that they could not fall totally and finally from grace: ‘I confesse God will not wipe out those, whose names he hath written in the booke of life, nor damne any

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 46

¹⁸ N. Rogers, *Christian Curtesie or St. Paul’s Ultimate Vale*, (London, 1621). sig. A2

¹⁹ Greenwood, *The Race Celestial in Workes*, p. 138

²⁰ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 18-19

of his elect which are in Christ.’²¹ As importantly, Rogers sought to provide an answer to a question so often posed, in one form or another, by opponents of Calvinism: ‘How can it stand with God’s justice, to punish the wicked for afflicting his church and people, seeing they are but instruments in the executing of his judgements, and do no other than that, whereabouts he sets them?’²² Rogers’ response was a justification of unconditional reprobation: ‘Know we that the will of God is secret or revealed. The former was never propounded as a rule for us to conform our actions unto; but the latter, which we find written in his law, unto which he requireth conformity and obedience; and by it we are enjoined to love our neighbours as ourselves, and by all good means to seek the good and advancement of our brethren. Now though they do the secret will of God - which the devvil and all reprobates do, and cannot otherwise choose but must do, will they nill they, yet because they run full butt against God’s revealed will, the rule and square of all their actions their condemnation is most just.’²³

Of course, any discussion of Rogers’ religious convictions in the 1620s must not be confined to his belief in double and unconditional predestination, for he felt very strongly on other issues as well. On the topic of preaching, for example, Rogers was uncompromising: ‘a soldier should dy standing and a minister in the pulpit preaching.’²⁴ In so saying, Rogers was echoing the words of Bishop John Jewel and Archbishop George Abbot but there can be no doubt that he agreed with them fervently because he was careful to stress all the different functions that must be performed by a preacher: ‘hath [the preacher] broke up the fallow ground of his people’s hearts? Then he must sow precious seeds therein. Hath he sowed the seed? Then he must water what he hath set and sowed ... Is knowledge planted? Then practice must be urged. Is practice good? Then perseverance, progress and

²¹ N. Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina in an Exposition of Isaisah’s Parabolical Song of the Beloved, Discovered to which God’s Vineyard in this our own Land is Parrallel’d*, (London, 1623), pp. 255-6

²² *ibid*, p. 226

²³ *ibid*, pp. 226-227

²⁴ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 10

continuance must be pressed.’²⁵ And as a preacher must direct his words according to the spiritual needs of his audience, so the listener must pay close attention to the contents of the sermon, for ‘the sermon that wants consequent meditation here, may be meditated in Hell thereafter.’²⁶ In placing such a considerable emphasis on preaching, and warning the laity of the dire consequences of disregarding sermons, Rogers was, if not uniquely, at least typically Puritan.

His Puritanism was equally evident in his comments on the communion: ‘the sacraments [of bread and wine] were ordained as a means to increase faith ... but [they are] so handled that they serve no other means than to increase ... judgement.’ He elaborated: ‘For as it fares with him that hath a suffetted stomach, that the more good meat he eats, the more it increaseth his corruption ... so it is with the wicked, whose hearts are full of poisonous corruption, and surfetted with sin, and so corrupt everything they have or doe receive. Yea such as antipathie there is betwixt God’s grace and man’s bad heart, that the more [God] wrastles with him, to bring him to salvation, the more he wrastles against [God] to his own confusion.’²⁷ These words were intended as a reminder that the bread and wine should be received only with a worthy heart and a good conscience. Of course, all clergymen believed that people should prepare properly for the communion but Puritans were, as Collinson has shown, more insistent on this point because of their belief that an unworthy individual could bring judgement on themselves by receiving the communion when not in a state of grace.²⁸

Another subject of particular interest to Puritans was the role of discipline in the Church of England. Rogers, like so many Puritans, felt that true discipline was lacking: ‘As for discipline ... our church is not destitute of it altogether: I would we had the execution of so much as our church alloweth. Neither doe we deny but therein there may be some defects and wants, as appears by those words in the Book

²⁵ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 202; Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 10

²⁶ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 11

²⁷ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 164

²⁸ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 271-273

of Common Prayer ‘untill the said discipline may be restored’. But doth it follow hereupon, that because discipline is wanting, the church is fading, and that the infirmity of one maketh the nullity of the others?’²⁹ Rogers was careful to stress that he was not, by criticising the level of discipline, denouncing the church as a whole. Nevertheless, his views would have been controversial, for complaints such as his tended to go hand in hand with a desire for individual ministers to be given increased disciplinary power, including the rights to exclude people from communion and to excommunicate members of the laity.³⁰ So although Rogers did not say that he thought ministers should have more autonomy in the exercise of discipline, nor indicate that he thought that ordinary ministers should be given the power to excommunicate lay people, both may have been implied by his words.

Rogers was far more explicit when discussing his views on the Roman Catholic Church than he was when discussing discipline in the Church of England. The Roman Catholic Church, Rogers wrote, suffered not only from ‘corruptions in doctrine’ but more seriously from corruptions ‘against the foundation’ which ‘overtune all’. ‘If [the corruption] be of malice or affected ignorance’, Rogers continued, ‘then doth such a church cease to be a church, neither is it any longer to be reputed a church. Thus the Church of Rome doth willfully and obstinately destroy the foundation of itself, and therefore may be concluded no church of God.’³¹ To condemn the Roman Catholic Church in such a way was not an exclusive mark of Puritanism, but, as Anthony Milton has pointed out, Puritan values and strongly expressed anti-papal opinions were closely associated. Through the medium of anti-popery, Puritans could show both that they were loyal to the Church of England and that they desired further reformation. Furthermore, although Puritans and non-Puritans alike thought that an extreme dislike of Roman Catholicism was proof of a person’s faithfulness to Christ, Puritans alone believed that uncompromising

²⁹ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 96

³⁰ Collinson, *English Puritanism*, pp. 16-17

³¹ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 98

anti-popery in an individual was one of the signs that they were of God's elect.³²

Therefore, in expressing anti-papal views Rogers was not affirming uniquely Puritan sentiments but in the light of his Puritanism his opinions have an extra significance.

The impropriation of tithes was not a concern confined to Puritans either; Rogers' ideas on this issue would have attracted the support of those outside the Puritan movement.³³ They were, nevertheless, entirely consistent with Rogers' Puritanism. It was Rogers' belief that: 'tithes are due only to the church; neither have the laity aught to do herewith; for where tithes are paid, there must be a matter of giving and receiving; the minister giveth spiritual things ... and receiveth carnal things. Now because laymen cannot perform the one, they have not to meddle with the other; for not keeping the condition they cannot claim the covenant.' These were strong words, and Rogers was obviously anxious that they were not misinterpreted as an attack on the authority of magistrates, for he continued: 'I do not deny but it may be in the power of civil magistrates to allow any other maintenance unto the minister, so it be competent'. However, Rogers emphasised that in saying this he was not compromising his own position: 'tithes are by law established among us [and] ... it is ... a sin to defraud the minister of his portion.'³⁴

Another issue on which Rogers had uncompromising views was Sunday observance. 'God's sabbath's are neglected', Rogers complained in 1620.³⁵ Frustratingly, he did not add by whom or in what way they were neglected but in 1623 he bracketed 'sabbath breakers' with 'blasphemers' and 'ungodly userers' and warned them that 'thou hast thy portion appointed thee, and that is brimstone and fire.'³⁶ In the 1620s, then, Rogers seem to have been a sabbatarian for he implied that Sundays

³² Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 31-36

³³ For evidence of non-Puritans with Essex parishes who supported Rogers views see S. Nettles, *An Answer to the Jewish Part of Mr. Seldon's History of Tithes*, (Oxford, 1625). *passim* and B. Walton, *A Treatise Concerning the Payment of Tithes in London*, (London, 1641). *passim*. Nettles was a Prayer Book Protestant and Walton a Laudian. Matthews, pp. 61, 158

³⁴ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, pp. 302-303

³⁵ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 55

³⁶ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 281

should be wholly devoted to the worship of God.³⁷ This was, again, not an exclusive hallmark of Puritanism but it was a view with which Puritans would almost inevitably have agreed.

Despite his strongly expressed views on all the issues discussed above, Rogers was a moderate Puritan. Indeed, he informed nonconformists: ‘that misery of miseries, a wounded spirit ... is the fruit of your church gadding and sermon following’.³⁸ Expanding upon his theme, Rogers explained: ‘The division of hearts must needs hinder the building of our new Jerusalem: God’s sabbaths are neglected, the word, the gospel of Christ Jesus, cannot have that free passage that it would otherwise have, were it not for our own home breed broyles. Some will hear none but refusers of conformity: others take advantage of their disobedience to contemn the ministry: both waies the Kingdom of Christ is hindered. It gives likewise a matter of encouragement unto our enemies. How cometh it to pass (say Papists unto us) that you will have so many sects among you? What mean the terms Zwinglians, Lutherans, Calvinists? How is it that some are Brownists, some Baraists, some Puritans, some Protestants. How happens it that touching ceremonies ... and discipline ... there is such disagreement? ... that giveth advantage to our enemies’.³⁹ Clearly it was Rogers’ belief at this time that by concentrating their attention almost exclusively on the issues of ceremony and discipline, nonconformists and sectarians were having an adverse impact on the progress of further reformation. Why then did Rogers himself express reservations about discipline in the Church of England two years later? Had he changed his mind? The answer is probably not; Rogers’ comments on discipline in *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* were an aside, not the main theme of his work. In any case, Rogers did not so much condemn the Church of England’s disciplinary record, as suggest that there was room for improvement.⁴⁰ Furthermore, in the same book, Rogers defended the Church of England: ‘I deny not

³⁷ K. Parker, *The English Sabbath*, (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 6, 214-216

³⁸ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 49

³⁹ *ibid*, p. 56

⁴⁰ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 96

but blemishes are in every church [but] ... we have the true word of God preached, the true sacraments of Jesus Christ administered ... we maintain at every point the most ancient creeds.’⁴¹ It should be stressed too that there is no evidence that Rogers ever refused to conform to the ceremonies of the Church of England or abide by ecclesiastical law.

Despite his preference for moderation, Rogers was prepared to give his support to nonconformist Puritans, as he demonstrated in 1629. In that year, Rogers was one of the forty nine Essex clergymen who signed the petition in support of the Puritan nonconformist Thomas Hooker. The petition informed the Bishop of London, William Laud, who seems to have been planning to prosecute Hooker for nonconformity, that ‘Mr. Thomas Hooker ... be, for doctrine orthodox, and life and conversation honest, and for his disposition peaceable, no ways turbulent or factious’ and urged him to consider with ‘honourable favour [Hooker’s] lawful suit’.⁴² In signing the petition, Rogers was acknowledging at least that he and Hooker shared some common religious and theological ground and it may be that, their differences on the issue of conformity notwithstanding, the two were friends.

Even if Hooker and Rogers were not friends, they shared a common patron in the staunchly Puritan earl of Warwick. The earl, who devoted most of his life to advancing the careers of Puritans such as Jeremiah Burroughes, Edward Calamy, William Gouge, Stephen Marshall and Hugh Peter, had been educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, but left ten years before Rogers’ matriculation. Precisely how and when Warwick and Rogers met is not known, though they must have been on good terms in 1623 when Rogers dedicated *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* to the earl and it is possible that they were still friendly in 1632 for in that year *A Strange Vineyard in Palestina* was republished under the title *The Wild Vine* but the original dedication remained.⁴³ There is no evidence of any relationship between the two men

⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 97

⁴² PRO SP 16/151 f. 65v-r; Davids, *Annals*, p. 153

⁴³ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, sig. A2; N. Rogers, *The Wild Vine*, (London, 1632), sig. A2

after 1632; this might be coincidence or it could be a result of Rogers' shift away from Puritanism in the 1630s.

Although the earl of Warwick was undoubtedly Rogers' most illustrious patron during the 1620s, he also benefited in that decade from the support of Lady Margaret Chibborne, the widow of Sir Charles Chibborne of Messing. In his will of 1620, Sir Charles appointed his wife executor of his estate and it was in this capacity that she presented Nehemiah Rogers to the living of Messing.⁴⁴ Sir Charles, who died only a short while before Rogers' arrival in Messing, may have had Rogers in mind for the vacant position, but he did not name the clergyman in his will. That having been said, it seems likely that Sir Charles would have been satisfied with Rogers, at least for as long as the latter maintained his moderate Puritan stance. Sir Charles, who was a lawyer, was one of the men to whom Thomas Gataker dedicated his 1619 'treatise historical and theological': *Of the Nature and Use of Lots*. Gataker, who is perhaps best known for his later role as a member of the Westminster Assembly, was not very well known 1619, although he had demonstrated his Puritan credentials whilst lecturing in Cambridgeshire in the 1580s.⁴⁵ In *Of the Nature and Use of Lots*, Gataker described and discussed occasions in the Bible when lots had been cast and argued that there were certain circumstances in which lots were lawful. His analysis contains a particularly striking passage on 'things indifferent': 'no action of a reasonable creature proceeding from reason, can possibly be so indifferent, but it must of necessity be either conformable to the rules of God's holy word or disconformable thereunto'.⁴⁶ It can be inferred from these words that Gataker believed that the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism and kneeling to receive the holy communion were unlawful because they were neither specifically commanded by God nor following direct biblical precedent. This view, which was shared by many Puritans,

⁴⁴ FRC Prob 11/135/24 f. 193r-194v; Newcourt, *Repertorium*, p.

⁴⁵ *Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, Volume I: Admissions 1420-1799*, (Lincoln's Inn, 1896); p. 104, T. Gataker, *Of the Nature and Use of Lots*, (London, 1619), dedication and sig. A2; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 117; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 25, 316

⁴⁶ Gataker, *Nature and Use of Lots*, p. 94

ran contrary to the official position of the Church of England, as set down in the Prayer Book, that some things were neither for nor against God's word.⁴⁷ Of course, Sir Charles Chibborne may not have shared Gataker's views on this issue but it is highly unlikely that he would have been named in the dedication had he not agreed with the contents of the book.

Lady Margaret Chibborne may have shared the Puritanism of her husband and Thomas Gataker. Certainly Rogers thought sufficiently highly of her in 1621 to describe her as 'right vertuous and truely religous' and praise her 'love to God, zeal to his house, testified to by your frequent repairing thereunto, your daily performance of religious exercise, yea privately in your closet where God onely seeth, and regardeth, your conversation lead in fear'. In short, Rogers credited Lady Margaret with a pious and godly lifestyle. Furthermore, he assured her that she was one of the elect and urged her to 'make sure [her] salvation unto [her]self'. Of course, not only Puritans spoke of the elect, but seeking assurance that you were of the elect was, as has been pointed out earlier, an especial Puritan concern.⁴⁸ Rogers was, therefore, encouraging Lady Margaret to continue along the straight and narrow Puritan path.

Ironically, Rogers himself wandered from that path, although it should be stressed that in the 1620s there were no signs that he would do so. Rogers' most famous patron in that decade, Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, was a Puritan, and Lady Margaret Chibborne seems at least to have been sympathetic towards Puritanism. Rogers began the decade working at the Puritan parish of St. Margaret's New Fish Street and lent his support to the nonconformist Thomas Hooker in 1629. Furthermore, Puritan beliefs on issues such as the importance of preaching, the lack of discipline in the Church of England, the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, and the sanctity of the sabbath are extolled in Rogers' first three books.

In 1631, Rogers published his fourth work, *A Sermon Preached at the ... Visitation of ... William, Lord Bishop of London*, which was licensed by Laud's

⁴⁷ Booty, (ed) *Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 19-20

⁴⁸ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, sig. A2

chaplain, William Bray. This was followed in quick succession by the publication of a new, extended version of *The True Convert*, licensed by Robert Austin, chaplain to Abbot.⁴⁹ Rogers' sixth work, *Mirroure of Mercy*, followed in 1640, having been licensed by William Juxon's chaplain, Thomas Wykes.⁵⁰ Taken together, these three works demonstrate that during the 1630s and early 1640s Rogers was still a Calvinist but that he had laid his Puritan sympathies aside. Rogers' Calvinism can be demonstrated to a greater or lesser extent by all three works. In his sermon of 1631 Rogers quoted from a series of Calvinist divines, most notably Bishop Joseph Hall, Archbishop George Abbot, John Yates and Bishop Gervase Babington.⁵¹ He also recommended John Calvin's *Institutio* to young divines as a suitable source for sermon subjects.⁵² Similarly, in *Mirroure of Mercy* Rogers recommended that his readers turn to the work of the Calvinist John Preston for an explanation of the full implications of Christ's death for mankind.⁵³ However, it is in the second edition of *The True Convert* that Rogers' Calvinism comes across most clearly. Rogers extended the length of his exposition of the prodigal son and added two new expositions: the first of the parable of the lost sheep and the second of the parable of the lost groat. The lost sheep and the lost groat, like the prodigal son, are seen as representing members of the elect who have gone astray but will inevitably be reclaimed by God: 'Though the godly are but few, yet (we see) God will be nevertheless mindful of them; but one sheepe goe astray, he will fetch it him: if but one groat is lost, he will loom it up: if but one sinner repents, there shall be joy in heaven for him: if but one prodigall come home, he shall be received.'⁵⁴ The reception of the elect into heaven was guaranteed because: 'Christ himself lives in the

⁴⁹ Arber, *Transcript, Volume IV*, (London, 1877), p. 234

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 453

⁵¹ N. Rogers, *A Sermon Preached at the Second Trienniall Visitation of the Right Honourable and Right Reverend Father in God, William, Lord Bishop of London, Holden at Kelvedon in Essex, September 3, 1631*, (London, 1631), pp. 5, 11, 24, 25.

⁵² *ibid*, p. 22

⁵³ N. Rogers, 'The Penitent Citizen of Mary Magdalene's Conversion' in *Mirroure of Mercy*, pp. 78-80

⁵⁴ N. Rogers, 'The Watchfull Shepheard his Care Over his Whole Flock, that None be Lost nor Wanting', in *The True Convert*, (1632), p. 164

hearts of those who are truly sanctified and converted and [that] Christ can die no more is evident. Now hee may as well die at the right hand of the father. as die in the heart of a Christian.’⁵⁵ Furthermore, the elect Christian had only God to thank for his salvation: ‘By the grace of God you are saved’, he wrote, ‘and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God ... this may serve for confutation ... of the Pelagians, who affirm that our good actions and cogitations proceed only from free will, and not from God’s special grace ... secondly it maketh against semi-Pelagians, I mean Papists, who are all for will, little or nothing for ... God’s grace.’⁵⁶

As God alone saved the elect, so God alone damned the reprobate. As Rogers explained, ‘Eternall desertion is where God (upon just causes best knowne to himself) leaveth man to himself wholly, and for ever, befalleth reprobates, onely ... as Caine, Esau, Judas and others, who are of old ordained to condemnation. The beginning of which desertion is in this life, when God bestowing upon them benefits either spirituall or temporall, as he doth upon his own servants, withdraweth that part of his benefit which hath the promise of eternall life annexed to it. The accomplishment whereof shall bee in another world, when they shall be totally separated from the presence of the Lord, and be left unto the divels, eternally tormented.’⁵⁷

Just as Rogers’ belief in double and unconditional predestination remained constant between 1620 and 1640, so he retained an emphasis on the importance of preaching. ‘The pulpit is not for show but for use ... The minister is the watchman. His charge and pulpit is his watchtower’, Rogers preached in 1631, and in 1640 he wrote that ‘teaching by word of mouth is the most effectual kind of teaching’.⁵⁸ But in 1631 Rogers for the first time qualified his enthusiasm for preaching. He did so by criticising those ‘who upon their first entry into the ministry ... preach ... twice every sabbath ... which is the cause of venting many raw and undigested meditations.’

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 190

⁵⁶ Rogers, ‘The Indulgent Father, his Gracious Entertainment of his Riotous yet Repenting Childe’ in *The True Convert*, (1632), p. 225

⁵⁷ Rogers, ‘The Watchfull Shepheard’ in *The True Convert*, (1632), p. 46

⁵⁸ Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, pp. 5-6, Rogers, ‘The Good Samaritan or an Exposition on that Parable Luke X Verse XXX-XXXVIII’ in *Mirroure of Mercy*, p. 9

Rogers suggested that ‘such as cannot preach often well ... spend more time in their studies and less in their pulpits’.⁵⁹ He was concerned too about those who took ‘the greatest mysteries of religion [as] fittest arguments for exercising their wits, as Eckius who discussing the question of predestination, in the very entrance to his discourse, gives his reason why he undertook this argument, for that he thought it to be the fittest question.’ Rather than attempt to tackle complicated questions such as predestination, preachers should, Rogers advised, ‘aske counsell of Calvin’s (or some others) learned *Institutions*, to peruse well the *Articles of our Religion* and the *Booke of Homilies*, as our church enjoyneth; that what you deliver for doctrine may be comprehended in essence, substance, effect or natural inference with some one of them. But of all sheaves let the Bible have preheminance.’⁶⁰ These views in themselves indicate that by 1631 Rogers had distanced himself from the Puritans with whom he had been aligned. Puritans would certainly not have suggested that preachers look to the *Articles of Religion* or the *Book of Homilies* for guidance when preparing a sermon, nor would they have agreed that it was wrong for young ministers to preach twice on a Sunday. In fact, Rogers disparaging comments about over-ambitious young preachers were probably aimed directly at newly ordained Puritans. Furthermore, in urging caution in the discussion of predestination, Rogers was not simply taking an anti-Puritan line, he was, more importantly, expressing an opinion held by both Charles I and William Laud.⁶¹

On other matters too Rogers was taking a conformist line by 1631. For example, he defended the need to catechise. ‘[It is] a great fault ... to scorn the catechism for a profounder kind of learning ... Let us first teach the principles plainly and diligently, and after a familiar manner by question and answer and spend one part of the Lord’s Day in this course’.⁶² Rogers also argued in support of confirmation: ‘The manner was: the children of the faithfull being catechized, were to make open

⁵⁹ Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, p. 16

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 22

⁶¹ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 48, 167

⁶² Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, pp. 22-23

and publike confession of the former principles viz their repentance: of their faith; of the sacraments; and after this they had hands lay'd upon them, and were confirmed to be of the covenant of God, and of the visible church. A ceremonie which (through the long neglect thereof) is much excepted and carped at, but may be wished that it were used oftener than it is and more respected.'⁶³ In expressing contempt for those who 'carped at' confirmation and 'scorn[ed]' catechising, Rogers was again thinking of his former allies in the Puritan movement and reinforcing the fact that there was now some distance between his views and theirs.

On the issue of church ornaments Rogers was also clearly a conformist by 1631, for he attempted to vindicate their use in the Church of England: 'You may remember what was said of the church of Boniface the Martyr, when the church had wooden chalices she had golden priests, but after, when she came to have golden chalices (as in the time of popery) she had wooden priests. But why touch I on this? For if superstition made our adverseries too careful and bountifull, prophaness and atheisme has made us too carelesse ... God holds himselfe contemned, when his churches are defaced and his utensils not decently preferred ... Meere human inventions in the circumstantialls of God's worship are not therefore unlawful ... unless in some other respect some sinfulness be found in them.'⁶⁴ In so saying, Rogers was following the standard Prayer Book line that even those things 'devised by man' should be 'reserve[d] ... for a decent order in the church ... [and] because they pertain to edification.'⁶⁵ And these were sentiments with which Rogers obviously still agreed in 1640 when he wrote: 'Things in themselves lawful, superstitiously abused are not through such abuse made unlawfull to bee used.'⁶⁶

As significantly, by 1640 Rogers had significantly softened his position on the Roman Catholic Church. Instead of boldly concluding that the Roman Catholic Church was not a true church, Rogers wrote: 'whether the Church of England or the

⁶³ *ibid*, p. 24

⁶⁴ *ibid*, p. 25

⁶⁵ Booty (ed), *The Book of Common Prayer 1559*, p. 18

⁶⁶ Rogers, 'The Penitent Citizen' in *Mirroure of Mercy*, p. 157

Church of Rome be the true church, and in which of these salvation is probably to be found is a hot dispute betwixt us and the Papists: but so fully and learnedly determined by that most reverend father in God the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury in his *Conference with Fisher*, that no more remains to be said of that point.’⁶⁷ *A Conference with Fisher the Jesuit* was a defence of the Church of England against the Roman Catholic Church but in it Laud acknowledged that the latter was a true church.⁶⁸ And as Rogers directed his readers towards the book, we can only assume that he had come to think likewise.

Rogers’ words in 1640 on the Roman Catholic Church did not directly contradict his condemnation of that church in 1623, rather they indicate that his ideas had changed. However, in his visitation sermon Rogers offered a perspective on discipline in the Church of England which was directly at odds with his stated concern in 1623 about the lack of discipline.⁶⁹ Specifically, he condemned: ‘a rash censuring of church government and discipline, through heate of affection and want of judgement’. He continued: ‘Censurious professors, are ignorant professors, try it when you please, this you shall finde, that those who spend their zeale in this way, have not wherewith to answer you if you question with them about fundamentall points.’⁷⁰ In other words, those who excoriated the government and discipline of the Church of England generally did so from a position of ignorance. Rogers was similarly impatient with separatists in the 1630s: ‘such then are to be reprov’d, as separate themselves from our church assemblies, because of the blots and spots, that are to be found therein; dreaming ... of such perfection here ... For what church will they joyne themselves to upon earth that is without filth?’⁷¹

Although he did not return to the theme of separatists, in *Mirroure of Mercy* Rogers again had harsh words for the Puritans or, as he preferred to describe them,

⁶⁷ Rogers, ‘The Good Samaritan’ in *Mirroure of Mercy*, p. 150

⁶⁸ Laud, *Works, Volume II: A Relation of a Conference Between William Laud and Mr. Fisher a Jesuit*, pp. 143, 333; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, p. 148

⁶⁹ Rogers, *A Strange Vineyard*, p. 97

⁷⁰ Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, p. 26

⁷¹ Rogers, ‘The Good Housewife, her Broom and Candle’ in *The true Convert*, (1632), p. 105

‘those who startle at the use of anything. which in former times hath bin, or in these days is abused by supersitious papists and idolators.’ Rogers derided them with the following words: ‘They can scarce with any peace of conscience, tell you the name of that hill on which St. Paul stood and preached to the men of Athens, or the signe of the ship of Alexandria wherein he departed. The daies of the week must not be called Monday, Tuesday &c. as ordinarily ... But they will number them ... The glorious company of saints and apostles, because too much honoured or rather dishonoured by papists shall be to them unsainted; their days must be called Peter’s, Paul’s, John Baptist’s, the saint must be left out, and so for the churches. The feast of Michael the Archangell, the purification of the Virgin Mary, and that of our blessed saviour’s nativity, may not be sounded with the masse, they will turn it to the tide, candletide, Christide, Michletide &c. Bay leaves may not be admitted into church or house, for the heathens so used them. I know not wither they durst ride upon a mule (though it were King David’s owne) for that Anah first found them.’⁷² Rogers’ point is that by focusing on these minor matters the Puritans had made themselves ridiculous. It would be better, Rogers argued, for them to lay these concerns to one side and be ‘in weightier matters more wise’.⁷³

From the evidence presented above it is clear that the views Rogers held between 1631 and 1640 were in many important respects different from those he held in the early 1620s. What is not clear is why Rogers changed his views, for that was something he chose not to explain. Indeed, Rogers never directly admitted that he had altered his opinions on any subject. He did, however, refer bitterly to the ‘false calumnies and ignorant censures of some ill affected spirits’ which may be a reference to the reaction of some of his acquaintances to his change of heart.⁷⁴ Certainly, the loss of some old friends or patrons would explain why some new individuals came to the fore in Rogers’ life in the 1630s. Of these, the most important were the

⁷² Rogers, *Mirroure of Mercy*, p. 79

⁷³ *ibid*

⁷⁴ Rogers, *A Sermon Preached*, sig. A2

clergyman's new patrons. They are of interest mainly because an examination both of their beliefs and their interaction with Rogers throws some light on a topic that the vicar of Messing avoided in print: his attitude to Laudianism.

One of Rogers' new patrons was Nicholas Hubert. He is an obscure figure but it is known that he presented Rogers to the sinecure rectory of Great Tey in Essex in 1632.⁷⁵ Rogers retained the living of Great Tey until 1640 and then swapped it for the living of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate in London. His partner in the exchange was Thomas Wykes, precentor of St. Paul's and licenser of *Mirroure of Mercy*, Rogers' work of 1640. *Mirroure of Mercy* was, of course, Calvinist in tone but since Wykes worked as chaplain to William Juxon it is probable that he also had Laudian sympathies.⁷⁶

Better known than either Hubert or Wykes is William, Lord Maynard. The 1632 edition of *The True Convert* was dedicated to Lord and Lady Maynard, and in the preface Rogers describes himself as their 'servant and chaplain'.⁷⁷ Precisely what responsibilities and personal ties lay behind these titles is not known because no other sources mention, let alone discuss, the relationship between William, Lord Maynard and Rogers. Without doubt, though, Rogers had a very high opinion of Maynard, for he wrote: 'your honour is deservedly esteemed, who have not onely entertained the love of the truth in your owne hearts but ... have provided a resting place for it under your honours roofe, so that your noble and well governed familie may bee honoured with the title of a bethel. Yea, if any deserve the style of the churches friend; the clergies sanctuary; the uncorrupt patron of church livings; a bountifull encourager of learning; a munificent favourer of vertue it is your honour ... Your honours free and undeserved favour in admitting mee into your honourable service, requires a humble acknowledgement.'⁷⁸ Why did Rogers have such a high regard for Maynard?

⁷⁵ Newcourt, *Repertorium*, p. 572

⁷⁶ J. Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857, Volume I: St. Paul's, London* (London, 1854), p. 18; Foster, *Early Series*, p. 1593; Arber, *Transcript, Volume IV*, p. 453

⁷⁷ Rogers, *The True Convert*, sig. A2. *The True Convert* was divided into three parts. Each part was dedicated to an individual but the book as a whole was dedicated to Lord and Lady Maynard.

⁷⁸ Rogers, *The True Convert*, sigs. A4v-A5v

Perhaps he views him as a model Calvinist patron. Certainly it would be odd for Rogers to have dedicated such an unambiguously Calvinist work to one who did not believe in double and unconditional predestination. Unfortunately, though, all the rest of the evidence for Maynard's beliefs dates from a later time. For example, in 1634 John Browning, rector of both Little Easton and Rawreth in Essex dedicated to his patron Lord Maynard *Concerning Publike Prayer and the Fasts of the Church*, a collection of sermons in which there is a brief but positive allusion to Arminian theology. Furthermore, he described Lord Maynard as his 'chief auditor, at the hearing of some of them', which suggests that his patron was well acquainted with, and probably shared, the religious and theological ideas he expressed in 1634.⁷⁹ Certainly Maynard was an Arminian four years later, because in his will of 1638, in which he appointed William Laud joint guardian with Lady Maynard of his son, he described Christ as having made 'general promises to all men penitent sinners'.⁸⁰ Whatever Maynard's theology in 1632, he was a Laudian by this time. At least, the private chapel that he had built at Easton Lodge in Essex conformed to the Laudian 'beauty of holiness' ideal, dominated as it was by a glass window showing Christ on the cross.⁸¹ The chapel was erected in the early 1620s so, as the Maynard's chaplain, Rogers must have officiated in there, something he would surely not have done had he objected to the image of Christ. This is not to say that Rogers positively favoured the picture, only that it is hard to believe that he could have worked for Maynard unless he had accepted or even favoured its presence in the chapel. The possibility that Rogers was of this last viewpoint is somewhat diminished by the fact that he never referred to the window, still less expressed admiration for it, but it cannot be ruled out completely. It would be easier to form an opinion on Rogers' probable attitude to the window had he ever clarified his views on other aspects of Laudianism, but he chose not to so do. Interestingly though, he seems to have respected William Laud. As we

⁷⁹ Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, sigs. A3, A4, pp. 164-5

⁸⁰ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 193

⁸¹ *ibid*

have seen, in his 1640 publication *Mirroure of Mercy* Rogers directed his readers to Laud's only published work *A Conference with Fisher the Jesuit*.⁸² More importantly, in 1635 Rogers gave the living of Gatton in Surrey to William Laud.⁸³ It might be argued that Rogers only gave the benefice to Laud in order to draw the attention of the Archbishop of Canterbury towards him, perhaps in the hope of promotion and there may be some truth in this; it certainly seems unlikely that Rogers gave the benefice of Gatton to Laud purely as an act of Christian charity. Indeed, if his aim was greater recognition it was achieved for in 1636 Rogers was appointed by the King to a prebend in Ely cathedral.⁸⁴ That having been said, it is equally unlikely that Rogers would have given Gatton to Laud if he had known himself to be in fundamental disagreement with any of his religious beliefs. However, in 1635 Rogers might have been unaware of Laud's support for innovatory policies, such as the railing in of the altar, and admired him simply as an energetic and efficient Archbishop of Canterbury.

This problem of deciding how Rogers regarded Laud's beliefs and policies could be resolved if it was known how Rogers felt about east end, altarwise, railed communion tables. Direct evidence for this is lacking, but on the eve of the metropolitanical visitation of 1637, Laud made some notes for his vicar general, Nathaniel Brent, and amongst these was the following line: 'Nehemiah Rogers desired (sic) an order for the setting up of a rail about the communion table in Messing church'.⁸⁵ Every other minister to whom Laud directed Brent's attention was to be investigated for nonconformity but it is not certain that Rogers was refusing to conform. In fact, exactly what lay behind Laud's note to Brent is unclear. Had Rogers written to Laud asking for the order for the railing in to be issued? And if so, why was this necessary? Was he experiencing difficulty in railing in the altar,

⁸² Rogers 'The Good Samaritan' in *Mirroure of Mercy*, p. 150

⁸³ Laud, *Works*, Volume VII, p. 242; *DNB* sub Rogers, Nehemiah. The circumstances under which Rogers acquired the living are not known.

⁸⁴ J. Le Neve (ed), *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae or a Calender of the Principal Ecclesiastical Dignitaries in England and Wales and of the Chief Officers in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge*, Volume I, (Oxford 1754), p. 360

⁸⁵ PRO SP 16/339 f. 123r

perhaps because of opposition from parishioners, or from the Puritan Matthew Newcomen, who had been his curate at Messing from 1632 to 1636?⁸⁶ If Rogers did want the table railed in was it simply in the spirit of conformity to the established church or for religious reasons? Or perhaps, and this seems the most likely explanation, Rogers did not want the communion table railed in at all and was employing delaying tactics. Certainly it is difficult to understand why in early 1637 Rogers would have required a specific order to rail in the communion table in Messing for as early as May 1636 Brent had instructed that all communion tables in the diocese of London should be railed in. Those parishes with Laudian ministers promptly complied with the order but Puritan led parishes were less co-operative, with many refusing to erect rails until forced to do so by the courts.⁸⁷ Rogers, probably because of his communication with Laud, was not taken to court for refusing to rail in the communion table but he seems hardly to have been enthusiastic about the change.

Robert Aylett did not share Rogers' feeling on railed altars, for he was that unusual combination a Laudian and a Calvinist. After his education at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, Aylett became commissary to William Juxon, Bishop of London.⁸⁸ In this capacity he became one of the most forthright enforcers of Laudianism within the diocese of London, incurring the wrath of William Prynne for upholding the innovations of the 1630s.⁸⁹ When not working for Juxon, Aylett wrote poems and it is these that bear witness to his Calvinism, for he penned lines such as: 'Christ loveth those he chooseth for his own.'⁹⁰ It was to Aylett that Rogers dedicated his essay 'The Good Samaritan' in *Mirroure of Mercy* with thanks for his 'many favours'.⁹¹ Of the relationship that lay behind Rogers' gratitude for Aylett's kindness there is no

⁸⁶ Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*, p. 370

⁸⁷ ERO D/AEV 7; *passim*, Davies, p. 227

⁸⁸ *DNB sub* Aylett, Robert

⁸⁹ W. Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, (London, 1637), pp. 351-354

⁹⁰ R. Aylett, *Divine and Moral Speculations in Metrical Numbers Upon Various Subjects*, (London, 1653), p. 22

⁹¹ Rogers, *Mirroure of Mercy*, sig. A2

indication either in the dedication or elsewhere but that the two men were friends is nevertheless interesting.

Almost as little is known of Rogers' relationship with Hanameel Chibborne, son of Sir Charles and stepson to Lady Margaret. They seem to have felt affection for one another, though, for Rogers dedicated his tract 'The Watchfull Shepheard', published in the 1632 edition of *The True Convert* 'to the truly generous and religious gentleman Mr. Hanameel Chibborne of Messing'.⁹² The fact that Rogers bestowed upon his son the extremely unusual name Hanameel is also suggestive of a closeness between the two men.⁹³ Perhaps a shared Calvinism was a factor in Rogers' and Chibborne's friendship; certainly 'The Watchfull Shepheard' is a Calvinist piece and Chibborne was sufficiently close to Robert Aylett to request that he was a witness to the codicil of his will.⁹⁴

Like his father, Hanameel Chibborne attended Lincoln's Inn, but unlike his father he seems to have had no Puritan leanings.⁹⁵ In fact, he was an enthusiastic conformist who spent his own money refitting and decorating All Saints', Messing. In about 1634 Chibborne purchased for the church a new communion table and two silver cups, two silver flagons and a silver standing dish for use during communion. At the same time, he added to the church wooden panelling with the royal arms and cherub heads carved in relief on it. In addition to all this, Chibborne supplied the church with an alms dish and two altar candlesticks, both of gilded wood, in about 1640. More interesting than all these, however, was the east window Chibborne commissioned from the artist Abraham van Linge.⁹⁶ The main part of the window was and is a pictorial representation of Matthew 25 verses 35-36: 'For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in

⁹² Rogers, 'The Watchfull Shepheard', in *The True Convert*, (1632), sig. A2

⁹³ N. Rogers, *The Rich Fool*, edited by Hanameel Rogers, (London, 1662), title page

⁹⁴ ERO D'ACW 30 5

⁹⁵ *Lincoln's Inn Admissions*, p. 191

⁹⁶ *R.C.H.M. Essex*, Volume III, pp. 180-181; V. Staley (ed), *The Library of Liturgy and Ecclesiology for English Readers*, Volume V, Part III, (London, 1904), p. xv

prison, and ye came unto me'.⁹⁷ The window is divided in six large frames and nine smaller ones. The six large frames all show figures in seventeenth century dress. The first is of a beggar being given loaves of bread by a group of affluent looking people, the second shows a beggar being given a drink of water, the third portrays a visitor being welcomed into a home, the fourth is of a half dressed man being provided with clothing, the fifth shows a number of people crowding around a sick-bed and the sixth a prisoner being visited in jail. The glass above the large frames is divided into nine small panels, two of these are decorated with stars and two with cherubs and the other three with the allegorical figures of faith, hope and charity. Faith is shown with a book and cross, hope with a dove and an anchor and charity with three angels.⁹⁸ The fact that the window represented the works of mercy rather than biblical scenes and did not show Christ or any of the saints is indicative of a certain restraint but it does not prove that Chibborne was not a Laudian. The window, and his other additions to the church could have been prompted by a belief in the 'beauty of holiness'. Furthermore, it would be extremely unusual for anyone other than a Laudian to add altar candlesticks to a church in 1640. But as no other record or indicator of Hanameel Chibborne's beliefs exists, it is impossible to prove that he was anything more than an ardent conformist.

It is not really possible to say, then, how similar Nehemiah Rogers' and Hanameel Chibborne's beliefs were but it is beyond doubt that between 1631 and 1640 the former was a Calvinist with a conformist position on preaching, catechising, church ornaments and discipline. Furthermore, he had at least two Laudian patrons. By 1658, however, Rogers had changed his views again. The third phase of his career, which may have begun at any time between the publication of *Mirroure of Mercy* in 1640 and the appearance of Rogers next two works, *The Fast Friend* and

⁹⁷ This quotation is taken from the King James Bible.

⁹⁸ The window was taken down during the Civil war and stored in a rood chest in All Saints', Messing. It was re-erected after the Restoration. Staley, *Library of Liturgiology*. Volume V, Part III, p. xv. The window is still the main feature of the church and the description given here of the window is based on my own observation of it.

The Figg-Less Figg Tree, in 1658, was marked by his abandonment of Calvinism and his adoption of the Arminian theology to which Laudianism was closely linked. Rogers made his first Arminian statement in 1658: ‘God would that a sinner would live and is willing to give him life and salvation, but it must be understood according to that cause of providence that he hath taken for him, in and by the new covenant. And that he may live and obtain salvation, God would that he should turn from his wicked wayes and come to the knowledge of the truth: And for that end and purpose he sends his words, and messengers to convince him of his sin, to reclaim him from his evill courses wherein if [he] be wanting [him]self, God withholds his power and [he] perishes: And thus by his conditional will, he wills the salvation of all; but by his absolute will which doth always most certainly and infallibly take effect he wills the salvation of none but the elect only.’⁹⁹ This statement can be better understood alongside another of Rogers’ pronouncements, that by which he explained how first God’s conditional will and then his absolute will took effect: ‘God decrees are immutable, and unchangeable, as himself, and secret to himself, we cannot dive into them; but there is a double time to be taken notice of by us; first, a time of preparing and trying before the unchangeable decree come forth, which to some is longer than to others ... And there is a time when the decree is come forth and past: till that be come forth and past, there is a dore of hope opened, but when that is past, and the dore shut, the prayers that we put up ... will not avayle, nor be successful ... Before the dore of God’s decree is shut, [prayers] may do much: but if the decree is past, all hope is past, prayer speeds no, the dore is now shut.’¹⁰⁰ It is clearly implied in these passages that God offered salvation to all but if the offer was not accepted within a certain time God would withdraw it and the person would perish. In *The Rich Fool* (1662), Rogers made a similar point: ‘Reason with some men about salvation, ask them how they hoped to be saved, casting off all care, rejecting the means ... they will tell you, that if it be God’s will they shall be saved, if not, they cannot help it, but it is God’s

⁹⁹ N. Rogers, *The Fast Friend or a Friend at Mid Night*, (London, 1658), pp. 300-301

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.* p. 259

will. But God clears himself, in that he wills the salvation of all. and that seriously and intentionally; else why doth he say it, protest it, swear to it. And why does he offer life and salvation in the ministry of the gospel to all? Why is he so earnest in pressing and persuading men to accept of salvation offered? And can [it be thought] that God's intentions are not serious, he having so many ways expressed his willingness and earnest desire, that we should accept of mercy offered? Whence is it that men perish but from the perverseness of the will of man, which will not accept the grace offered upon God's terms; he chinks the way that should lead us to life, but man will not walk that way ... following the sway of his own crooked and perverse will, [he] rejecteth those means which God afforded for his salvation, and so perisheth everlastingly; who is now to be blamed?'¹⁰¹ There can be little doubt that Rogers thought that the individual was to be blamed for a few lines later he compared the grace of God's salvation to a rope offered to a drowning man and explained that the man could choose either to catch hold of the rope or ignore it. In other words, grace was universally offered but not universally accepted.

Although, Rogers' theology changed considerably between 1640 and 1658, his views on preaching remained fairly constant. Once again he wrote that preaching was of the utmost importance: 'A minister may be pastorally non-resident, albeit he be not personally so. If he be a stranger to his pulpit, though he be no stragler outside the bounds of the parish, he resides not: (And indeed this is the worst non-residencie of the two).'¹⁰² But, as in 1631, Rogers did not give preaching his unqualified support. He stressed that ministers should take account of certain factors: 'some things ... though necessary and useful ... yet if we use them alwayes and without change, the stomack will be cloyed therewith: but bread we are not weary of, albeit we use it always ... so it is with holy and divine truth; there are some things which it may be more convenient to conceal, than to make mention of, in publique auditory ... And there are others, albeit sound and good. yet they are too intricate and high for an

¹⁰¹ Rogers, *The Rich Fool*, p. 182-184

¹⁰² Rogers, *Fast Friend*, p. 28

[audience] of a mean capacity ... But there are other divine truths which are necessary to be known to all, being of daily use, either for the [e]stablishment of faith, or the practice of life; the state and welfare of the souls of our people, doth very much depend, on the frequent iteration and inclucation of them.’ It was the actions of the Devil that made repetition so essential. As Rogers explained: ‘So long as the Devil fights with the same sword, give us leave to defend with the same buckler, whilst he doth not vary the sine, nor the temptation ... what need we vary the doctrine?’

Inevitably perhaps, Rogers was keen to ensure that this argument was not used as an excuse for constant repetition or the construction of inadequate sermons so he added: ‘Some things must needs be recalled, by the minister in preaching, to guide the attention of his auditory, into the ensuing discourse ... but the attention of an auditory may not be discouraged with needlesse tautology.’¹⁰³ All these quotations demonstrate that for Rogers frequent and regular preaching was not only a necessary duty but also a very precise skill. At the most basic level, most Puritans would have assessed the importance of preaching in the same way. Nevertheless, few Puritans would have accepted that some doctrines were best avoided. Unfortunately, Rogers did not say to which doctrines he was referring but if he was thinking about predestination, a subject he had suggested in 1631 that newly qualified ministers should not discuss, Puritans would have disagreed especially strongly. The ire of Puritans would have been raised too by Rogers’ suggestion that a minister should speak primarily of ‘comfortable things’. As a result of the aforementioned incongruities, Rogers’ views on preaching are extremely difficult to categorise.

Rogers’ opinions on prayer were more straightforward. He advised that prayers would be more effective if they were short and frequent ‘for the shorter we are the lesse apt to wander’.¹⁰⁴ More significantly, he claimed that prayers were more likely to garner a successful response if they were made by several people in unity:

¹⁰³ N. Rogers, *The Figg-less Figg Tree or the Doome of a Barren and Unfruitful Profession Lay'd Open*, (London, 1658), pp. 14-16

¹⁰⁴ Rogers, *Fast Friend*, p. 389

‘[If] the prayer of one ... may do so much with God, how much more the prayers of many, yea the whole church of God, were they united? what judgement cannot many hands together (if in time lifted up) bear off? What blessings are they not able to pull down from heaven on us?’¹⁰⁵ This was the first time Rogers had addressed the subject of prayer in his writings in anything other than the most general way but it seems likely that he had been in favour of set, public prayer since the 1630s; certainly, a belief in set, public prayer was in harmony with the conformist stance he took on other issues at that time.

Equally the defence of episcopacy that Rogers penned in 1658 could have been written by a conformist in the pre-Civil War era: ‘a parity in the ministry is very dangerous, the mother of sects and schisms, which to prevent (saith Calvin) the elders, that were ministers of the word, did chuse but one of every city, from amongst themselves, unto whom they gave the title bishop ... lest by equality ... dissensions should arise ... one bishop may be richer than another, or more learned than another, but he cannot be more a bishop than another bishop is.’¹⁰⁶

Just as ‘a parity in the ministry’ was bound to have a detrimental effect, so ‘a unity’ would inevitably have a positive one. And Rogers felt that in England in 1658 the ministry was too divided. This he blamed partly on the attitudes of their congregations: ‘Hearers are many times too factiously inclined ... they [make] a choyce to themselves, of this or that preacher, whom they would follow, with contempt of the rest ... so it is among us to this day. Some affect those onely that are of the same judgement with them (it may be Episcopalian, or Independent or Presbyterian...) albeit all teach the same fundamental truths, and the same Christ ... It is true, Christians may acknowledge a difference of gifts in teachers and prefer one before another, and esteem best of that ministry by which [they] hath received most good ... yet ought we to esteem all that are good; hear all as occasion is offered;

¹⁰⁵ Rogers, *Figg-less Figg Tree*, p. 469

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*, p. 171

reverence all: and bless God for all. This factious disposition of hearers of the word, hath been a great cause of dissention amongst ministers.’¹⁰⁷

In fact, it was not just divisions among ministers that troubled Rogers, he was more generally concerned by the state of religion in England in 1658: ‘If we cast our eyes on our present condition, and compare it with what it was, we have cause to take up bitter lamentation ... Not long since [the church] was in such a condition of rest and peace ... we had the gospel truly and sincerely taught amongst us; the sacraments frequently administered, marriage honoured and solemnized, the sabbath religiously sanctified, our congregations duly frequented; the hearts of the people knit together, as one man in praising God, hearing his word, singing psalms ... But in a sudden all is in confusion ... [There are] factions and fractions.’¹⁰⁸ Rogers did not set a date on the golden era for which he was so nostalgic. Was he referring to the 1620s? If so, he liked them better with hindsight than he had at the time for, as will be remembered, he had complained in 1621 about the neglect of the sabbath.¹⁰⁹ Or perhaps Rogers was describing the 1630s. If so, the passage above would constitute further evidence of Rogers’ toleration of Laudianism, for if he had disliked the innovations of the 1630s he would surely not have painted the decade in such glowing colours.

Despite Rogers’ negative feelings in 1658 about the organisation of religion in England and his support for the King during the Civil War, he had words of praise for the current political establishment.¹¹⁰ Indeed, he suggested that the Protectorate was a legitimate form of kingly government: ‘How weary were we grown of a good monarchical government, under which we prospered, and flourished for many years, (which indeed is the best form of government under heaven). Yea weary of receiving so many benefits by one man? Indeed we were weary of that we longed for [but] we are returned to that government which we despised ... and yet still we are discontented people, nothing will please us: and who can but look upon this as an evident token of

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, p. 193

¹⁰⁸ Rogers, *Fast Friend*, pp. 282-3

¹⁰⁹ Rogers, *Christian Curtesie*, p. 55

¹¹⁰ Matthews, p. 56

God's ... displeasure against us?'¹¹¹ Rogers' point was surely that the people of England should learn to appreciate the government with which they had been blessed.

Maybe Rogers felt well disposed towards the established government in 1658 because they had recently restored his right to preach. Undoubtedly Rogers was thankful to Edward Herries, Major General of Essex for petitioning for his preaching license to be returned, for Herries and his wife were among those to whom *The Fast Friend* was dedicated. The others whom Rogers honoured in the dedication were 'the inhabitants of Chich St. Osyth: Mr. Benjamin Rose, Mr. Gregory Rose, Mr. William Jeffrey, Mr. Longly, Mr. Ourles, Mr. Will: my Christian friends and constant auditors.'¹¹² These men are even more obscure figures than Herries and as little is known of their religious beliefs, though if they really were Rogers' 'constant auditors' it would seem likely that they agreed with some or all of the views he expressed at that time. As perhaps did the three otherwise unknown figures Thomas and Dorothy Roberts, to whom *The Figg-less Figg Tree* is dedicated and Anthony Luther of Doddington in Essex, named in the dedication of *The Rich Fool*.¹¹³

The only other person known to have patronised, or shown an interest in, Rogers during the 1650s is slightly better known. She was Mary Savage, Countess Rivers. Her own religious views cannot be traced because her only written legacy, her will of 1658, contained no statement of faith and no bequests to ministers.¹¹⁴ Nor were any books dedicated to her. It is interesting to note, though, that Earl Rivers, her late husband and the son of the Catholic Elizabeth Savage, Countess Rivers and Sir Thomas Savage, had patronised Edward Cherry, a Laudian and Arminian clergyman from Essex. Cherry, who was originally employed by Elizabeth Savage as tutor to her son, was presented by his erstwhile pupil to the benefice of Great Holland in Essex in 1633. And when the living was sequestered from him in 1642 he found shelter in the

¹¹¹ Rogers, *Figg-less Figg Tree*, p. 274

¹¹² Rogers, *Fast Friend*, sig. A2.

¹¹³ Rogers, *Figg-less Figg Tree*, sig. A2; Rogers, *The Rich Fool*, sig. A2

¹¹⁴ FRC Prob 11 272.5, f. 33r

Cheshire home of Earl Rivers.¹¹⁵ Of course, Mary Savage may not have shared the Earl's inclinations, but if she did that would explain her interest during the 1650s in the by now doctrinally Arminian Nehemiah Rogers.

It will, however, remain difficult to determine why anybody gave support to Rogers in the 1650s, because his collection of beliefs at that time was somewhat eclectic. His Arminianism, his belief in set, public prayer, his defence of episcopacy and his call for unity among ministers were not an unusual combination, but they fit awkwardly alongside his zeal for preaching and his positive assessment of the Protectorate. That having been said, consistency was not a hallmark of Rogers' career. He made the progression from moderate Puritan to defender of the Church of England and theologically he shifted from being a Calvinist to an Arminian. We have noted too that in the 1630s despite his apparent reluctance to rail in the communion table at All Saints', Messing he had at least two Laudian patrons and thought highly of William Laud. Since Rogers never elaborated on the reasons behind his changes of heart they will always remain somewhat obscure but it is worth saying that all his different beliefs seem to have been sincerely held. If Rogers' only thoughts were for promotion within the church or adhering to the ascendant viewpoint he would not have been a moderate Puritan in the 1620s nor an Arminian in the 1650s. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that, as has been shown above, at various times Rogers defended all his beliefs convincingly in print. Rogers was not a vicar of Bray, adopting whatever viewpoint was most convenient or advantageous at a particular time. Rather, his beliefs and ideas changed during his long and eventful career. If Richard Drake is representative of those who remained consistent to one set of beliefs throughout their lives, Rogers is a reminder that some of those who changed their views completely did so on principle. As importantly, Rogers demonstrates that it was not necessary to be a Puritan or a Laudian in Essex to prosper, for he was neither in the 1630s and still benefited from the patronage of William, Lord Maynard, Robert

¹¹⁵ White, p. 3; G. E. Corayne, *The Complete Peerage*, (London, 1949), pp. 26-27. Elizabeth Savage, Countess Rivers inherited her title from her father.

Aylett, Thomas Hubert and Hanameel Chibborne. Rogers is significant too because during his lifetime he gained the support of such a diverse range of Essex patrons. He was the link between four of the most powerful people in Essex, all of whom had different religious perspectives: Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, William, Lord Maynard, Robert Aylett, and Mary Savage, Countess Rivers. Despite, not because of, his frequent changes of mind, Rogers always found someone in Essex willing to befriend him. Rogers proves that to be atypical in Essex in the early seventeenth century was not to be marginal.

CHAPTER FIVE: LAY ATTITUDES TO LAUDIANISM IN ESSEX

Laudianism, John Morrill has asserted, was ‘profoundly offensive to most lay ... opinion’.¹ This is a bold statement and one that has never been adequately tested, perhaps because it is difficult to provide a balanced picture of lay attitudes to Laudianism. The problem for historians is an in-built bias in the sources. For whilst the church court records provide a relatively large amount of information on tension, dissent and nonconformity, evidence of conformity and support for Laudianism was not systematically or regularly recorded there or elsewhere. In other words, the extant sources contain interesting and valuable material but do not reflect all shades of opinion equally. Thus this chapter is concerned mainly with opposition, but not in order to convey the impression that Laudianism was overwhelmingly unpopular but rather to do justice to the fascinating material in the church court records. Evidence of support for Laudianism, however, has not been ignored or marginalised, it has been investigated as thoroughly as evidence of opposition to Laudianism.

The Laudian alterations would have had an impact on quite a substantial proportion of lay people in Essex. In the 1630s there were at least forty one Laudian ministers working in the county. As a result of pluralism and movement between parishes, these forty one ministers worked in a total of fifty parishes across Essex, meaning that nearly thirteen per cent of Essex’s 387 parishes had an identifiable Laudian minister at some point prior to the outbreak of the English Civil War. Furthermore, the county was in the diocese of London which was presided over by two successive Laudian bishops during the reign of Charles I: William Laud from 1628 to 1633 and William Juxon from 1633 to 1646.² The metropolitan instruction which ordered that the laity should receive communion from an altarwise table placed behind a rail, at the east end of the church was enforced within the diocese.³ And

¹ J. Morrill, ‘The Religious Context of the English Civil War’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, 34, (1984), p. 163

² *DNB sub* Laud, William and Juxon, William; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 70-71, 48 and 178-9, 208.

³ Julian Davies argues that although William Juxon insisted that the communion table be railed in at

Laudian practices and ceremonies would have been extremely visible to the laity who worshipped in parishes led by a Laudian minister. Parishioners would have been aware of the beautification of their churches, even if the changes were not as obvious as those made by Drake at Radwinter. They would have observed too that a greater emphasis was now placed by their clergyman on ritual, unified and uniform public worship and public prayer. More importantly, parishioners would have noticed their minister's new, but strongly held, conviction that the communion table should be set altarwise, behind rails, at the east end of the church and treated, as befitted the most sacred object in the church, with extreme reverence. Above all, perhaps, members of the laity would have been struck by the fact that their minister now insisted that they receive communion kneeling at the altar rails.

Therefore there was a notable Laudian presence within a county which is usually characterised as Puritan.⁴ However, that a significant number of the laity in Essex were affected by and aware of the innovatory nature of Laudian beliefs and practices gives no clue as to their attitude towards them. The following questions, therefore, remain to be answered: did the growth of Laudianism cause a marked increase in parochial disputes? If so, were these disputes over specifically Laudian issues or did they relate simply to long fought over aspects of pre-Laudian conformity such as kneeling at the sacrament, the churching of women, the use of the surplice and the use of the sign of the cross in baptism, which had been controversial with Puritan nonconformists since the Elizabethan era? Does Judith Maltby's argument that Prayer Book Protestants, those deeply attached to the Prayer Book ceremonies, often heartily disliked Laudianism withstand close scrutiny? Or is Christopher Haigh correct in his assertion that supporters of the Prayer Book ceremonies, 'parish anglicans' as he terms them, were naturally inclined to support Laudianism?⁵ Or did

the east end, he did not stipulate that it had to be placed altarwise (Davies, p. 218) but, as pointed out in the introduction, his argument is flawed.

⁴ W. Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 87; J. Morrill, *The Revolt of the Provinces: Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War 1630-1650*, (London, 1980), p. 38

⁵ J. Maltby, 'By This Book: Parishioners, the Prayer Book and the Established Church' in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 117; C. Haigh, 'The Church, the Catholics and the People' in

some Prayer Book Protestants reject and others embrace Laudianism as Alexandra Walsham has argued?⁶ The aim of this section is to explore all these questions by studying in detail the relationships between Laudian clergymen and their parishioners and, where possible, comparing the reception accorded to the clergyman before he adopted Laudianism with that which he provoked afterwards. Thus some evidence from the 1620s, and even earlier, will be incorporated, although the focus will be upon sources from the 1630s.

The scope and depth of any such examination necessarily depends on the quality and quantity of the evidence available. As explained in the introduction, the county of Essex is well endowed with source material. Therefore, evidence has been drawn from a variety of places, notably commissary, diocesan and consistory court visitations, the Quarter Session Records, the Calendar of State Papers Domestic and wills. However, the archdeaconry court records comprise the principal fount of knowledge on this subject. They are particularly useful not so much because they survive almost intact, for this does not distinguish them from the other sources mentioned above, but rather because the archdeaconry court dealt almost exclusively with religious matters, thus distinguishing itself from, for example, the Quarter Sessions. Furthermore, the archdeaconry court sat four times a year and consequently handled a larger volume of cases than the commissary, consistory or diocesan courts combined.

From the archdeaconry court act books can be obtained the name and place of residence of all those presented for refusing to attend their parish church, for failing to receive the communion, or for neglecting to obey any other rule of canon law. As well as these facts a variable amount of detail was given about the offence, including sometimes the defendants justification for his actions. Therefore, by using the archdeaconry court act books it is possible to draw some conclusions about the nature

C. Haigh (ed), *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, (London, 1984), pp. 218-219

⁶ A. Walsham, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited: Catholics, Anti-Calvinists and 'Parish Anglicans' in Early Stuart England', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Volume 49, (1998), p. 636

and frequency of parish conflicts and to establish whether they centred around Laudian issues or merely questions of pre-Laudian conformity. Additionally, it is possible to establish, at least in part, what type of parishioners tended to become involved in disputes with their clergymen. Periodically, the court records also furnish evidence of support for Laudianism. Sometimes, for example, a witness will testify to a churchwarden's enthusiasm for the Laudian changes. From wills, as well, a positive attitude towards Laudianism occasionally emerges. If a member of the laity left money to a Laudian minister, for instance, it is possible that he favoured Laudianism.

This chapter will necessarily be somewhat biased towards the events in the archdeaconry of Colchester because the sources for that district are especially detailed and it is therefore possible to reconstruct more fully for that archdeaconry than for others the situations within particular parishes. Relevant information from other areas will be cited, however. Of course, not all the parishes within the archdeaconry of Colchester are equally well documented but for a few the evidence is particularly good. One of these is the parish of Kelvedon Easterford, the living of which was held by Alexander Bonyman from 1629 to 1640 and was by 1636 considered almost a model Laudian parish by William Laud's vicar general Nathaniel Brent. Many of the events that occurred in Kelvedon Easterford during this period have been recorded and commented upon by James Sharpe. He takes the view that disputes in this parish were not, on the whole, motivated by Laudianism and anti-Laudianism but usually examples merely of 'crime and delinquency'. A thorough investigation of all conflicts within the parish, though, suggests that religion was a more prominent issue than Sharpe's analysis implies.⁷

The problem of parishioners who refused to attend church, for example, may have been no more common in Kelvedon Easterford after than before the introduction of the Laudian innovations, but it was not an offence committed, as Sharpe implies, almost exclusively by the criminal element.⁸ Two of those presented to the

⁷ J. Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England*, p. 105

⁸ The criminal element may be defined as those who had more than one conviction for 'secular'

archdeaconry courts for non-attendance at church, John Barker and George Barker. must have had strong religious convictions, for why else would they have been members of a nonconformist conventicle that met in Kelvedon Easterford in 1640?⁹ Those parishioners who attended church in the morning but not in the afternoon or attended on Sundays but not on fast days may well have been motivated by religious concerns too. Certainly godly parishioners were known to attend their parish church in the morning but to boycott it in the afternoon unless a sermon was to be delivered. Equally, some Puritans assiduous in their attendance at church on Sundays, refused to go to church on fast days because they did not recognise these days as spiritually significant.¹⁰ It is probable then, that nonconformity was often at the root of non-attendance at church in Kelvedon Easterford.

Sharpe argues that it was primarily the irresponsible element in Kelvedon Easterford who did not receive the sacraments and to back up his conclusion cites a couple of examples of parishioners who admitted that their reasons for not receiving communion were far from ideological.¹¹ He says nothing, however, about the vast majority of non-communicants who made no such excuses. Presumably this majority did not make weak excuses for their failure to receive communion because their motives were religious. Some of these lay people had refused to receive communion in the parish even before the Laudian era. They were in all probability Puritan nonconformists. Amongst this group were Elizabeth Cudmore, who does not seem to have received communion once in her parish between 1631 and 1635, Elizabeth Raven and William Ringwood.¹² Others, such as Caroline Todd and John Williamson, were not presented for refusing to receive communion until after the altar

offences such as adultery, drunkenness, theft or assault.

⁹ ERO D/ACA 46, f. 127v, D/ACA 54, ff. 4v, 108v; Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England*, p. 104

¹⁰ Lake 'The Laudian Style' in Fincham (ed), *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 175

¹¹ Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England*, p. 104

¹² ERO D/ACA 48, f. 63r, 153r, D/ACA 49, ff. 81v, 132r, 228r, D/ACA 50, ff. 1r, 137v

was railed in at the east end of the church. Perhaps their objections were primarily to the Laudian innovations.¹³

Of those who refused to receive holy communion some seem to have been motivated by Puritan nonconformity and others by antipathy towards Laudianism; the parishioners who would not pay the various parish rates can be divided in the same way. Thus the seven people presented to the archdeaconry court in 1629 for refusing to pay the parish rate may have been Puritan nonconformists who objected to paying the rate because they disapproved of how it would be spent or simply individuals not prepared to co-operate with the parish authorities.¹⁴ Jeremy Aylett, by contrast, can be identified as an anti-Laudian. The rate that he refused to pay in 1635 was to finance the railing in of the altar at the east end of the church and what are described as ‘innovations’.¹⁵ These were obviously changes to which Aylett was very strongly opposed for he did not merely refuse to make a contribution towards their cost, he also brought a complaint against the churchwardens who were implementing them. Furthermore, Aylett’s stance must have been prompted by hatred of Laudianism rather than Puritan nonconformity for he had not previously refused to attend church, to receive communion or to pay church rates. The churchwardens Aylett attempted to indict may have supported the erection of an east end altar rail and the introduction of the other ‘innovations’ or they may simply have been law abiding citizens with no strong religious views.

Certainly not all parishioners in Kelvedon Easterford were as co-operative as Bonyman’s churchwardens of 1635. There were a total of six occasions, involving eleven separate people, upon which parishioners disrupted divine service in Kelvedon Easterford. The first of these incidents was the only one to pre-date the Laudian innovations. In June 1632 it was brought to the attention of the archdeaconry

¹³ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 106v-r

¹⁴ ERO D/ACA 47 f. 107r

¹⁵ ERO D/ACA 51 f. 106v-r. From 1633 to 1636, apparently following instructions from the archdeaconry court authorities, a rail had been placed around the communion table in Kelvedon Easterford but the table left in the nave of the church. The reason for the issue of this order is not known. ERO D/ACV 5, f. 37v, D/ACA 51, f. 8v

authorities that the two men who were then churchwardens in Kelvedon Easterford were disturbing Bonyman by ‘usual standing in the churchyard and gathering their rates upon Sundays in the time of divine service ... causing a great disturbance to the congregation.’¹⁶ The wording of this presentment implies that the churchwardens were making a conscious effort to disturb the minister upon a regular basis. The churchwardens must have ceased behaving in this way or been replaced in their office, though, for Bonyman never made another complaint against them. In fact, he seems to have faced no more of this kind of opposition until April 1636. At that time, one man was presented for ‘disturbing the congregation in the tyme of divine service and sermon’ and another for ‘misbehaving himself in church in the time of divine service and sermon.’¹⁷ Robert Boyton found himself before the archdeaconry court in May 1637 for ‘misbehaving himselfe in the church’. In June 1637 a man was presented for ‘laughing and misbehaveing himself in the church in service time.’¹⁸ Eleven people were brought before the court in May 1639 because ‘in the tyme of divine service’ they had talked ‘in the churchyard ... so loud that the minister was feared to send out the churchwardens to quiet them’.¹⁹ One of this group was John Wood, who had been a constable, a churchwarden, and an overseer of the poor in Kelvedon Easterford.²⁰ Although this event may have been an isolated incident, it was almost certainly the intention of the group to unsettle Bonyman and disrupt his service. Sharpe dismisses such events as ‘childish pranks’ but it is by no means obvious that religious concerns did not motivate at least some of these events, perhaps particularly that concerning the churchwardens, who were presumably people with strong religious convictions.²¹ Moreover, it should be stressed again that it may not be a coincidence that services were disrupted more regularly in the late 1630s, by which time the Laudian innovations would have been well established in the parish.

¹⁶ ERO D/ACA 48 f. 182v

¹⁷ ERO D/ACA 50, ff. 113r, 137v

¹⁸ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 240r, D/ACA 52, f. 59v

¹⁹ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 220v-r

²⁰ J. Sharpe, ‘Crime and Delinquency’ in Cockburn (ed) *Crime in England*, p. 95

²¹ *ibid*, p. 104

In early 1640 Bonyman left Kelvedon Easterford, where he had encountered regular and persistent opposition, to take up the living at Pleshy in Essex. His luck did not change. The living of Pleshy was sequestered from Bonyman in 1642 on the grounds that he was 'scandalous in his life and [had] expressed great malignancy against Parliament'.²² The departure of Bonyman, however, did not entirely stem the tide of anti-Laudian acts in Kelvedon Easterford. On July 28th 1640 a group of at least three labourers from Witham and Kelvedon Easterford entered the church, tore up the altar rails, removed the surplice and stole some of the church plate. One of the three men charged with committing this crime was John Ayly, a petty criminal from Kelvedon Easterford, although about the other two nothing of significance is known.²³ The truth about John Ayly's past cannot be questioned. What must be not only questioned but also dismissed is the notion that Ayly's character was representative of most who opposed Bonyman. The majority of opposition to Bonyman came from Puritan nonconformists and those who objected on religious grounds to the Laudian innovations.

Peter Allen held the living of Tollesbury for twenty eight years in contrast to the eleven years Bonyman spent at Kelvedon Easterford. He seems to have encountered somewhat less opposition than his colleague but he was certainly no less a Laudian for during his last few years in the parish he insisted that communicants receive from the altar rails.²⁴ Allen's first few years at Tollesbury, to which he was appointed in 1616, seem to have been particularly quiet ones. Six of Allen's parishioners were presented for not receiving the communion at Easter 1619 but this presentment was an isolated one.²⁵ It is not the case, though, that Allen generally enjoyed peace and quiet in the pre-Laudian era. In fact, according to the act books he faced more opposition between 1623 and 1632 than at any other time. Quite a few

²² Newcourt, *Repertorium*, p. 351

²³ ERO Q/SR 311/ 46-48, J. Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn (ed) *Crime in England* p. 105

²⁴ White, p. 45

²⁵ ERO D'ACA 40, f. 104v-r

people refused to attend church or to receive communion during this time but whether these individuals were troublemakers or Puritan nonconformists cannot be ascertained.²⁶ The latter, however, were certainly noticeable in Tollesbury in the period in question. In September 1623 the yeoman John Osbourne of Tollesbury was presented for illegally ‘p[er]forming the sacrament of baptisme’ and saying that ‘he would have none to be witnesses to his child for the godfather [is] but a whorem[onger] and a drunkard and a cockold’ and ‘godmothers but whores, slutts and scolds.’²⁷ This incident is almost impossible to explain. Clearly Osborne did not object to baptism *per se* but he seems to have had some reservations about the form which the ceremony of baptism took in the Church of England. Indeed, the extremity of his action makes it more likely that he was a sectarian than a nonconformist. And he may not have been the only sectarian in Tollesbury for it seems likely that Richard Woolbull and Thomas Sanders, presented in October 1632 for being ‘at the churchgate and church wall catechising’ during divine service and ‘refusing to come into church’, had equally little sympathy with the Church of England.²⁸ Unfortunately, there is no indication of the nature of their teaching and so no light can be thrown upon their beliefs.

The hedge preaching of Woolbull and Sanders immediately preceded a period of calm in Tollesbury which was apparently not broken until 1636. The date is suggestive, for the Laudian innovations would have been fully instituted in the archdeaconry of Colchester by this time, but there is no evidence which proves that any of the incidents was directly provoked by anti-Laudian sentiment. Still, it is worth recording that in June 1636 the yeoman David Lambe refused to subscribe to the minister’s salary. Later that year a parishioner was presented for ‘playing’ during divine service. Two men were presented in March 1637 for ‘irreverent’ behaviour in

²⁶ ERO D/ACA 44, ff. 49v, 131r, D/ACA 45 f. 210r, D/ACA 47 ff. 34r, 141v, D/ACA 48, ff. 14v-r, 167r, D/ACA 49, ff. 47v, 81r, D/ACA 52, f. 58r

²⁷ ERO D/ABW 50/249, D/ACA 44, f. 49r

²⁸ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 226r. Thomas Sanders had also been presented for refusing to receive communion and for abusing William Broome, the churchwarden, in April 1633. D/ACA 49, f. 46r

church and one man was presented at that time for wearing a hat during divine service. At the same court session George Fannlis was accused of ‘coming in and going out of the church during divine service.’ And finally, in June 1637, another Fannlis, William, was one of three men presented for ‘talkeing’ and ‘misbehaving’ during divine service.²⁹

Francis Wright, Vicar of Witham, was less fortunate than Allen. He encountered difficulties from the beginning to the end of his period within the town, although he was perhaps particularly unpopular after he railed in the altar and insisted that communicants receive from there. In April 1628, four months at most after he had arrived in Witham, he was presented to the Quarter Sessions because he ‘did with much violence thrust out of the chancel door many of those persons which were prepared to receive communion, which persons the day before had given their names and paid their offering to him.’³⁰ The amount of information provided on this event by the Quarter Sessions Rolls is not sufficient to explain the reasons for Wright’s objections to giving communion to this group of parishioners. It may have been that Wright did not want to administer communion in the chancel and that this group of parishioners were insisting on receiving it in there. If this was the case it is not clear from where Wright did wish to give the communion. It is more likely that Wright did not wish to administer the sacrament to this group of parishioners because they refused to kneel at the communion table. What is certain, is that this was not the only occasion on which Wright came into conflict with his parishioners over the communion. In May 1632 Jeremy Harralt was presented to the archdeaconry court for hitting Wright as he stood by the communion table but once again a full explanation of the event is not provided. At the same court session Nathaniel Nowell and Richard Boone were accused of refusing to pay towards the bread and wine for the communion.³¹ Did their refusal stem from a dislike of having to kneel to receive the

²⁹ ERO D/ABR 8/188, D/ACA 51, ff. 103r, 161v, 250v, D/ACA 52 f. 58r.

³⁰ ERO Q/SR 261/21 p. 155

³¹ ERO D/ACA 48, ff. 155v, 168r

communion? These disputes surrounding the communion did not leave Wright totally isolated, though. In his will of 1633 George Armond of Witham left Wright ten shillings and instructed that another ten shillings should be used to buy a door for the chancel.³² It is plausible that Armond intended the door to be used to shut troublemakers out of the chancel at the time of communion.

No issue was as controversial in Witham as the communion but there were nevertheless disputes over other issues including refusal to attend church, for which offence a handful of parishioners found themselves before the courts. One of those who refused to attend Witham church, Daniel Redgwell, was attending a different but unnamed parish church in both the morning and the afternoon. A few of Redgwell's fellow parishioners were accused simply of refusing to attend church.³³ Others attended their parish church on Sunday but whilst there attempted to disrupt Wright's services. In June 1631 John Carter was presented for 'misbehaving' himself in church and for refusing to kneel during the service. Thomas Herris appeared at the same court session accused of 'railing and usual talking in church'.³⁴ He was not the only one who felt moved to so behave, Jeremy Garrard was accused of 'brawling in the chancell of the p[ar]ish church of With[am] aforesa[id] in divine service [at] Easter last past'. In his defence, Garrard claimed that he was 'provoked' by the 'opprobrious and scandalous speeches' of Henry Wood but did not indicate exactly what it was in these speeches that he found offensive.³⁵

After this spate of presentations, there was a period of relative quiet in Witham, but this was halted by a series of incidents which began in 1637. It is interesting to note that, as in Tollesbury, discontent resurfaced after the introduction of altarwise, railed communion tables. Nevertheless, it should be added that, although the innovations may have aggravated parishioners, they do not seem to have been

³² J. Gyford, *Witham 1500-1899: Making a Living*, (Witham, 1996), p. 197

³³ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 42r, D/ACA 49 ff. 158r, 228r. D/ACA 50 f. 38v

³⁴ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 42r. 110v-r

³⁵ ERO D/ACA 48, unnumbered lose leaf folio dated 20th June 1632. Were Jeremy Harralt (presented to the archdeaconry court in May 1632 for hitting Wright) and Jeremy Garrard the same person? Nothing is known about Henry Wood.

directly at issue in 1637 and 1638. That having been said, the motivation of John Tussil, presented in June 1637 for misbehaving himself in church is not recorded and cannot be inferred.³⁶ He could have been a troublemaker or attempting to make a serious religious point. If he was simply a troublemaker this would seem to set him apart from the vast majority of those who became involved in disputes with Francis Wright. For example, there can be little doubt that the three men presented in October 1638 for refusing to stand at the Gloria were Puritan nonconformists.³⁷ One of these three men, Thomas Northortoutie, also became involved in a relatively long running dispute over the wearing of hats in church. The trouble started when a parishioner removed a 'peg' on which hats were supposed to be hung during divine service. It had presumably been removed as an act of defiance, for following its removal John Hussey, Alexander Hussey and Thomas Northortoutie were all indicted for wearing hats in church and the churchwardens found themselves before the archdeaconry court for failing to present those who wore hats in church.³⁸

Most of the disputes described above were ones in which obedience to pre-Laudian rituals was at issue. However, there is evidence that opposition that was specifically anti-Laudian did emerge at Witham. For example, when John Fisher, a man with no previous record of objecting to church ritual, was presented for not receiving the communion in May 1639, it was clearly stated that his objection was to receiving from the rail.³⁹

While Francis Wright was battling with John Fisher and his other opponents in Witham, Thomas Newcomen was attempting to control the two livings in Colchester to which he was appointed in 1628: Holy Trinity and St. Runwald's. Newcomen encountered opposition from parishioners in both these parishes but opposition at Holy Trinity was limited. Perhaps the most interesting incident occurred in June 1636. In that month a man was presented to the archdeaconry court

³⁶ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 107r

³⁷ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 75v

³⁸ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 257v, D/ACA 53 ff. 75v, 99r, 119r, 134v

³⁹ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 147v, D/ACA 53, ff. 75v, 218r, 219r

for saying that he would not 'receive the bread and the devell together' and claiming that 'he would be brained before he would receive the sacrament after this manner' i.e. kneeling at the altar rails.⁴⁰ Whilst it is clear that his opposition was provoked at least in part by a strong dislike of the innovatory altar rails, it is not known whether or not this individual objected also to kneeling to receive communion.

The opposition to Newcomen at St. Runwald's also intensified with the railing in of the communion table. The order to rail in the communion table was issued in January 1636 but the churchwardens refused comply with the order until threatened with excommunication unless they complied.⁴¹ The opposition Newcomen faced from his churchwardens can hardly have prepared him, however, for that which he was to encounter later, much of which seems to have come from Puritan nonconformists. Several parishioners refused to receive the sacrament kneeling at the altar rails or refused to attend their parish church. John Furley was presented early in 1638 both for refusing to kneel to receive the sacrament and for refusing to attend his parish church. He claimed that part of the reason he did not want to attend Newcomen's church was because the minister did not preach frequently enough. He seems to have had the support in this view of most of his immediate family who were also presented for refusing to attend their parish church.⁴² Daniel Cole and his wife were accused in 1638 of refusing to receive the sacrament from Newcomen and of refusing to kneel at the litany, the confession of the sins and the 'collects'.⁴³ Edward Firmyn was also presented for refusing to receive the sacrament and his wife found herself before the archdeaconry court in May 1640 for refusing to give thanks for the safe delivery of her child.⁴⁴ The objection of Furley and his wife to churching suggests that they also were Puritan nonconformists.

⁴⁰ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 120v

⁴¹ ERO D/ACA 51, ff. 28v, 38r, 50r, 51r, 62r, 72r, 79r, 87v

⁴² ERO D/ACA 53, f. 9v-r, 17v

⁴³ ERO D/ACA 53 ff. 17r, 24r, 25v-r, 239v-r

⁴⁴ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 23r, D/ACA 54, f. 97v-r

By far the most vehement opposition to Newcomen came, however, from Samuel Burrows, perhaps the best known lay Puritan nonconformist in Essex. The story of the disagreements between Newcomen and Burrows was recounted at the time by William Prynne in his book *A Quenche-Coale*. Prynne's sympathy with the cause of Burrows is clear but as the historian John Walter has pointed out, reference to the archdeaconry court records and the articles drawn up against Burrows in the Court of High Commission allows Prynne's rendering of the story to be largely corroborated.⁴⁵ Prynne's account was published in 1637, the events he described happened towards the end of 1636 and in the first few months of 1637.

Three times Burrows attempted to receive communion in the chancel but each time Newcomen refused to administer the sacrament to him on the grounds that he was not kneeling at the altar rails.⁴⁶ Frustrated by Newcomen's refusals, Burrows indicted Newcomen at the Quarter Sessions for using innovations. The bill was found to be *ignoramus*. Prynne claimed that this was mainly because the bill had been badly draw up by the clerk but also noted that most of the jurymen were friends or supporters of Newcomen's. Unfortunately the names of these jurymen have not survived for it would be interesting to know more about the men who gave their support to Thomas Newcomen and the Laudian innovations.⁴⁷

Even though it failed, in bringing the bill Burrows had succeeded in angering not only Newcomen but also Bishop William Juxon's commissary, Robert Aylett, and so, on the following day, Burrows was excommunicated from St. Runwald's. Burrows refused to accept the sentence of excommunication and attended St. Runwald's the following Sunday. Newcomen, being unable to persuade the churchwardens to remove Burrows from the church, ceased giving the service and left the church himself. Not satisfied by this minor triumph, Burrows went to Aylett to complain not only about his excommunication but also about Newcomen's ceasing to

⁴⁵ J. Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence*, p. 179

⁴⁶ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 120v-r; Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, p. 351

⁴⁷ The only source for this piece of information is William Prynne because the quarter sessions rolls from 1636 do not survive. Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, p. 351

deliver his service without good reason. Dr. Aylett retaliated by threatening Burrows with High Commission and excommunicating him from all the churches in England. Again Burrows refused to accept the excommunication. On the following Sunday it was not only Newcomen, but several other Colchester clergymen, who gave up their services as Burrows visited first one church and then another in the Colchester area.⁴⁸ On the following day, Monday 3rd October, Burrows continued his campaign against Laudianism by making a second attempt to indict Newcomen at the Quarter Sessions. This time a different but equally anonymous jury found in favour of Burrows. They condemned Newcomen for his 'schismatic and factious disposition'* and his use of 'innovations'*. Newcomen responded to this defeat by successfully indicting Burrows in the Court of High Commission.⁴⁹ Apparently, Burrows countered in turn by taking the case to the Court of Star Chamber but nothing is known of what, if anything, became of the case in that court.⁵⁰

What is known is that this did not represent the end of Newcomen's troubles. An anonymous and libellous verse published in the late 1630s, the authorship of which is unknown, attacked several clergymen from the Colchester area. The brunt of its spleen is vented upon Theophilus Roberts, the parson of St. Nicholas in Colchester but the author also had harsh words for William Eyres of Great Horkesley, Gabriel Honifold of Ardleigh and Thomas Newcomen. The author implied that Newcomen was notorious:

'...Newcommon; that man

I'll need not much of him disclose

Because his actions can.'⁵¹

⁴⁸ Notes William Aylett drew up from William Laud in 1636 (PRO SP 16/339/77) corroborate Prynne's account of the events surrounding Burrow's excommunication. Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, pp. 352-353

⁴⁹ A copy of the articles made against Burrows at the Court of High Commission is to be found in the Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 70, ff. 107r-111r.

⁵⁰ W. Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, pp. 351-358, quotations from p. 357

⁵¹ PRO 16/229/123

Newcomen did have some good news in the 1630s, however. In 1638 he was left £10 by John Wilbye, the famous composer of madrigals who had spent much of his life in the service of the Catholic, Countess Rivers.⁵² Richard Hayes of Colchester bequeathed Newcomen £40 in 1639. Furthermore, Hayes jointly entrusted to Thomas Newcomen and three other ministers from Colchester £60 which he requested be spent on repairs to the church of Holy Trinity.⁵³ But by 1642 Newcomen's opponents undoubtedly outweighed his friends. In that year he was violently attacked by a crowd of some 2000 people. He was seized from the house of his patron Sir John Lucas, his clothes were torn from him, he was beaten with cudgels and halberts and finally, at the advice of Daniel Cole, who was now Mayor of Colchester, carried off to the town jail.⁵⁴

Although it may have comforted him little to know it, Newcomen was not the only Laudian minister in Colchester who had to contend with the ire of a number of his parishioners, Samuel Cock, Rector of St. Giles' from 1630 was in a similar position. But Samuel Cock initially upset not the nonconformists in his parish but the ecclesiastical authorities. His offence was described as: 'neglecting to catechise on Sundays in the afternoones according to the King's instructions.'⁵⁵ Cock, however, seems to have quickly amended his behaviour and soon the displeasure he faced came not from the authorities but from his parishioners. The two most common offences in the parish of St. Giles' were failing to attend church or refusing to receive communion. Both were as common before as after the implementation of Laudianism and so cannot be used to judge the popularity or otherwise of the changes of the 1630s.⁵⁶ There is other evidence, though, that the latter did not win universal approval. Thomas Lamb, for example, one of those who refused most regularly to

⁵² FRC Prob 11/172/122, f. 170v-r; G. Martin, *The Story of Colchester From Roman Times to the Present Day*, (Colchester, 1959), p. 51

⁵³ FRC Prob 11/178/145, f. 240v

⁵⁴ B. Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus*, (London, 1640), p. 2

⁵⁵ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 154r

⁵⁶ ERO D/ACA 47 f. 184r, D/ACA 48, ff. 186r, 231v, D/ACA 49, f. 72v-r, D/ACA 50, ff. 33v-r, 198r, D/ACA 51, ff. 12v, 122v, 123v, D/ACA 52, ff. 17r, 68v-r, D/ACA 53, ff. 87v-r, 202r, D/ACA 54, ff. 6v, 8v, 11v-r, 161v, D'ALV 2, 44v

attend church and to receive communion, was as violently opposed to the altar rails as he was to the Prayer Book ceremonies. In July 1636 the charges against him were that he had condemned divine service and sermons, refused to come to church, refused to allow his child to be baptised in church and said that ‘he would be brained before he would receive the holy sacrament after this manner’. He would have been objecting, like the parishioner at Holy Trinity whose words he echoed, to receiving the sacrament whilst kneeling at the altar rails.⁵⁷ Lamb, who was presented again in 1639 for refusing to bring his children to be baptised within the parish, was certainly a nonconformist and may have been the famous Baptist evangelical of that name.⁵⁸

Of the beliefs of other parishioners at St. Giles’ it is not possible to be so sure but John Alger, Samuel Bream and John Tillot, who refused to contribute to the repairs to the church in 1635 may have done so because of their nonconformity, as might Samuel Pollit, who refused to pay a similar rate in October 1638.⁵⁹ About the nonconformity of the churchwardens who, in October 1639, invited ‘Mr. Blackaby, a suspended minister of Suff[olk] to preach in their church not using any prayers of the church before sermon and not showing his licence’ there can be no question, for Mr. Blackaby was almost certainly Richard Blackaby, the famous Suffolk Puritan minister.⁶⁰ Puritan nonconformity is not, however, an adequate explanation for all the conflicts within the parish of St. Giles! George Whaler, John Creek, Richard Branson and Richard Paine, all of whom refused to pay towards the rail round the communion table and the bread and wine in July 1636, do not seem to have had any previous quarrels with the established church and may simply have been objecting to the Laudian innovations.⁶¹ If Richard Branson was opposed to all things Laudian in 1636, he had changed his mind by his death in 1640 for in his will he left Samuel

⁵⁷ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 122r.

⁵⁸ ERO D/ACA 54, f. 11v; H. Spyvee, *Colchester Baptist Church: The First 300 Years 1689-1989*, (Colchester, 1989), p. 14. The Colchester Baptist Thomas Lamb became leader of the London Baptist Church before his death in 1673.

⁵⁹ ERO D/ACA 50, ff. 118r, 119v, D/ACA 53, f. 88v

⁶⁰ ERO D/ACA 54, f. 8r; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 30-32

⁶¹ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 121r

Cock a share of his house in the parish of St. Giles', Colchester.⁶² 1640 was also the year in which Jacob Beule and Thomas Dixon, parishioners of St. Mary Magdalene's, Colchester were presented to the archdeaconry courts for receiving communion at St. Giles', Colchester.⁶³ Is this an example of Laudian lay people gadding to a Laudian parish?

In 1630 Alexander Read was appointed to the living of Fyfield. His time there does not seem to have been very happy for he commented in his Laudian tract of 1635 that it was: 'Undecent that in parishes there are [those] that come not to church in six weeks, eight weeks, eighteen weeks together, being able persons. Undecent that in a parish of three or four thousand people there should be found three beside the clerk that answer amen to our prayers or make any response to the commandments or other parts of the liturgy ... and that parishioners should throng by thirties or forties to other churches and leave their own empty. That a sick part[y] should send to the next parish to be prayed for, that another on his death bed should send for the same minister home to visit him, to preach for him. And in the meantime the proper pastor should not be accepted.'⁶⁴

There are six parishes all roughly equidistant from Fyfield, so it is impossible to know with any certainty to which parish and minister Read was referring. However, it seems unlikely that Read was speaking of High Ongar because Josiah Tomlinson, the minister there, was a Laudian and had his living sequestered from him in 1643. Read's parishioners might have been travelling to Moreton and sending for the minister there, Samuel Hord, who although an Arminian does not seem to have been a Laudian. Hord managed to retain his living during the Civil War and the Protectorate which suggests that he was not unpopular. Alternatively, Read may have been making reference to Beauchamp Roding, Chipping Ongar, Norton Heath or

⁶² ERO D/ACW 13/230

⁶³ ERO D/ACA 54, f. 161r

⁶⁴ Read, *A Sermon Preached*, pp. 16-19

Willingale for the ministers of these parishes, although not known Puritans, did not have their livings sequestered from them in the 1640s.

It is likely that Read's complaints, to whomever they referred, were exaggerated for his audience at the visitation of Archbishop Laud but, as the act books show, it is true that he faced opposition from parishioners. Most of this opposition seems to have come from nonconformists in Fyfield. At the beginning of 1634 Read was presented to the archdeaconry courts by his churchwardens. They accused him of only preaching once a month, of only administering the communion once during 1632, of failing to keep the King's birthday and of refusing of baptise the child of Thomas Boardman on Sunday morning. Read is reported to have said that children should only be baptised in the afternoon.⁶⁵ At the same court session, Read made counter accusations against his churchwardens. Robert Ashwell's offences were listed as failing to provide a Book of Homilies and failing to present those who did not attend their parish church on Sundays. 'I have been compell[ed] to come back from church in the most parte of the holidays in the yeares for lack of company to reade prayers to', Read lamented. Another three men, George Ramsay, Anthony Wright and Richard Stanes, who are all described in the act book as churchwardens, were presented 'for sufferinge some of their p[ar]ish to stand in the churchyard in the tyme of divine service and will not present them'.⁶⁶ Another two tit for tat presentments occurred in 1635. In January, Richard Stanes found himself before the court again, this time for 'standing in the churchyard at the time of divine service'. It is recorded that 'Doctor Reade himself affirmaid that he had begun prayers before he himself [and] Anthony Wright churchwarden went forth to admonishe Richard Stanes to come into the church'. What is presumably the same incident was portrayed from a slightly different angle in February 1635. This time it was Read who was presented. He was accused of beginning prayers 'before he or the churchwardens had gone to

⁶⁵ ERO D/AEA 40, f. 58v

⁶⁶ ERO D/AEA 40, ff. 58v, 89v, 309r

admonish Richard Stanes to come into church.’⁶⁷ Apart from this there were few presentments involving the people of Fyfield.⁶⁸ The evidence cited above suggests that this might be a result of Read’s churchwardens condoning the behaviour of those who disliked the rector of Fyfield.

Richard Drake, another Laudian who was unable to rely on the support of his churchwardens, was appointed to the parish of Radwinter by his father on September 9th 1638. As his unpublished autobiography records, Drake started to encounter problems within his parish almost immediately. The first arguments were over the repairs made by Drake to the chancel. Some of Drake’s parishioners did not believe that the floor needed to be levelled or the doorway blocked. Nor were they happy about the new rood screen erected by Drake, which was decorated with pictures of cherubim. Drake was even accused of worshipping the images on the rood screen.⁶⁹ Discontent was caused too by Drake’s refusal to administer the sacrament except from the altar rail. Members of his congregation objected in particular to his excluding from the communion Henry Coote and, as they claimed, 100 other parishioners who knelt but not at the altar rails.⁷⁰ However, Drake’s real problems did not begin until 1640. On July 9th a few of his parishioners, aided and encouraged by soldiers who were off to fight the Scots, ripped out the altar rails and smashed and burnt the rood screen. By September 15th the hostility towards Drake had apparently mounted to such an extent that he was only able to preach at the Bishop of London’s Triennial Visitation at Great Dunmow in Essex because of the protection afforded to him by soldiers under the command of his friend James Reynolds, the deputy lieutenant for Cambridge and the Isle of Ely.⁷¹ Then, early in 1641, when Drake had been condemned by the Grand Committee on Religion but given permission to remain in office until his case was heard by the House of Lords, one of Drake’s

⁶⁷ ERO D/AEA 40, f. 309r, D/AEA 41, f. 6r

⁶⁸ ERO D/AEA 38, ff. 224v, 295v, D/AEA 40, f. 58v

⁶⁹ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS, D 158, f. 5v; Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 180

⁷⁰ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS, D 158, f. 47v. None of the other 100 parishioners is named in the articles against Drake.

⁷¹ Venn, Part 1, Volume III, p. 444; Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS, D 158, f. 5r

churchwardens, Richard Durden, suggested a compromise. Durden told Drake that the parishioners would withdraw the charges against him if he would pay the salary of a curate chosen by the congregation.⁷² When Drake refused, the opposition in Radwinter intensified. This opposition was led by Durden himself. In August and October 1641 and February 1642 Durden refused to provide the bread and wine for the communion. He claimed that the 'parishioners found fault with the charge'. In other words, the parishioners were not prepared to pay for the bread and wine. The dates are significant because they indicate that Drake was trying to give communion at least once every two months. Presumably, some of his parishioners only wished to receive it 3 times a year, as was normal in the early seventeenth century. It should be noted that there is no indication that the bread and wine were not provided in December 1641 and it was usual for one of the communions to be given on Christmas Day. Durden and Drake also disagreed over the position of the communion table. Drake believed the communion table should stand in the chancel but Durden, in an attempt to annoy his minister, placed the communion table either by the north wall or in the nave.

All the opposition to Drake described so far was provoked or exacerbated by the Laudian innovations but it is clear that dislike of conformity also ran deep in Radwinter. On September 19th 1641 Durden locked the surplice and hood away and would not allow Drake to use them during divine service. Later that month Durden refused to unlock the church door in order to allow Drake to deliver a St. Matthew's Day service. The church apparently remained locked for a week.⁷³ Other parishioners participated just as enthusiastically as Durden in the campaign of opposition and obstruction. On October 5th 1641 Drake conducted the marriage of Thomas Underwood and Joan Sander. Drake was able to pronounce the couple husband and wife, but half way through the prayer 'O God which by thy mighty power' one of the guests apparently cried 'enough, enough' and the couple and all the

⁷² *ibid*, f. 6v

⁷³ *ibid*, f. 43r

guests left the church. Abraham Chapman removed two service books from the church and also tried to remove the hood and the surplice on February 18th 1642. When the case came before the Court of Assizes John Traps said in Chapman's defence that the books he removed from the church were mass books. Inevitably, the court found against Chapman. John Traps also appeared before the Court of Assizes as a defendant. He was found guilty of sitting in church with his hat on and inquiring of the curate 'are you at Mass again?' on February 21st 1641 and of refusing to allow a child to be baptised with the sign of the cross on April 8th 1642. Traps is reported to have called the sign of the cross 'the mark of the beast'. This was one of four occasions on which parishioners in Radwinter tried to prevent children being marked with the sign of the cross at baptism. One of those parishioners, John Smith, was successfully prosecuted at the Court of Assizes for snatching his child from the curate before it had been signed with the cross.⁷⁴ Not all of those who caused disruption were so easy to prosecute. On March 8th 1642 it was children who 'made a most horrid noise ... profanely abusing the confession, Lord's Prayer etc.' Two days afterwards it was the wives of John Mountford and Thomas Cornel who caused trouble. They stole into the chancel and cut a foot of material from the bottom of the surplice. No such subtlety was used on March 24th 1642. On that date a group of parishioners held down the curate and tore the surplice from him. On another occasion parishioners rang the church bells in order to disturb the curate as he said prayers.⁷⁵ Soon after this incident, which occurred in June 1642, Drake left Radwinter for a while.

When Drake returned to Radwinter he was the victim of an attack, which was described by his supporters thus: 'upon Sunday January 15th 1643 in the afternoon Richard Drake was violently assaulted in the church in form and manner following: William Voyle, pretending authority to be lecturer of the parish aforesaid, whence or

⁷⁴ *ibid*, f. 44r. Unfortunately the assize records from the early 1640s are not complete and no record of any of the cases described above has survived.

⁷⁵ *ibid*, ff. 44v-r, 45v-r

how we know not, coming into church in the time of divine service with a great cudgel in his hand came directly to the reading desk where the aforesaid Richard Drake was performing his duty and in violent manner laid both his hands on the said Richard Drake endeavouring to thrust him out of the desk. Richard Drake thereupon labouring to go into the pulpit to preach was violently pulled down by the said William Voyle. But the said Richard Drake recovering himself and taking hold with both hands of the pulpit door and the rail was again pulled down by the said William Voyle, John Smith, Richard Smith, Matthew Spicer and Stephen Sellon and thrown down in the desk and from thence fal'd on his back on the church floor and getting on his legs again was punched on the back, tugg'd by his gown and violently thrust out of the church by Matthew Spicer, Richard Smith [with the assistance of] Augustine Hawkins [who said]: "Let us have him out of the church and knock his brains out". John Smith kicked, stamped and trod on him being thrown to the ground in the middle alley.'⁷⁶ In total ten of Drake's parishioners testified to the truth of the information given above. They were William Rolfe, John Cormit, Thomas Barnes, William Wakelin, William Reynolds, William Turtliby, John Turtliby, John Morris, Thomas Kemp and Thomas Jaggard.⁷⁷ The fact that they were sympathetic towards Drake at this time indicates that they were at least tolerant of Laudianism and they may even have approved of the innovations of the 1630s.

Events in the parishes mentioned above are more fully documented than those in other parishes that had Laudian ministers. There are, however, some interesting pieces of evidence from parishes not previously mentioned, a few pieces of which serve as a reminder that Laudianism was not universally unpopular. Seven Laudian ministers from Essex, John Cross, vicar of Gosfield, Thomas Darnell, vicar of Thorpe-le-Soken, Edward Jenkinson, rector of Panfield, John Lake, vicar of Great Saling, John Simpson, rector of Mount Bures, Clement Vincent, rector of Danbury

⁷⁶ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D 158, f. 48r

⁷⁷ *ibid.* Drake's curate Thomas Garnham and Daniel Minot, who describes himself as a clergymen but about whom nothing can be discovered, also testified to the truth of the statement.

and Nicholas Wright, rector of Theydon Garnon, were accused of playing or encouraging games on Sundays.⁷⁸ Presumably some parishioners must have participated in this game playing and perhaps at least some of these parishioners were Laudians. Occasionally Laudian ministers who held two livings were sequestered from one but able to retain the other. For example, Jeffrey Watts was forced to resign from Clavering but retained Great Leighs and Joseph Long was sequestered from Fingeringhoe but kept Great Clacton.⁷⁹ Of course, Watts and Long must have modified their beliefs and practices as the religious climate began to change but the important point is that the parishioners of Great Leighs and Great Clacton were not so hostile towards Laudianism as to attempt to have their ministers ejected in the 1640s. These pieces of evidence indicate that even in parishes about which little is known, there were people who tolerated, accepted or even favoured Laudianism.

Inevitably, though, a number of the Laudian led parishes which are mentioned only rarely in the church court records had their problems. Nearly all Laudian ministers or their churchwardens presented at least a couple of parishioners for not attending their parish church.⁸⁰ A few of these parishioners were additionally accused of visiting other churches. For example, in August 1631 Maria Fogg of Theydon Garnon admitted to attending Epping Church in preference to her own parish church but claimed that her choice was prompted not by religious considerations but by the fact that the journey to Epping Church was ‘better and easier’ than that to Theydon Garnon church.⁸¹ In 1634 a parishioner from Pebmarsh was presented to the Consistory Court for attending Easton church in Suffolk rather than his own parish church.⁸² The charge of ‘going to another church once on a Sunday’ was also made

⁷⁸ White, pp. 15, 19, 29, 36; Matthews, pp. 149, 163

⁷⁹ Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 122-3

⁸⁰ See, for example, ERO D/ACA 43, f. 96v, D/ACA 44, f. 134r, D/ACA 48, f. 230r, D/ACA 50, ff. 33v, 116r, D/ACA 54, f. 105v, D/AEA 41, f. 103v, D/AEA 34, ff. 31v, 41v, 206v, D/AEA 35, ff. 4r, 51v, D/AEA 36 ff. 6v, 169r, D/AEA 37, ff. 5r, 174v, D/AEA 39, f. 168v, D/AEA 40 f. 122v, D/AEA 41, f. 249r, D/ALV 2, ff. 2v-r, 61r, 87r, 240v-r, 307v-r, D/ABA 7, f. 107v-r, D/ABA 9, f. 221r,

⁸¹ ERO D/AEA 38, 199r

⁸² ERO D/ALV 2, f. 61r

against Mrs. Guyon of White Colne in June 1636.⁸³ It is probable that some of the other lay people who were presented for not attending their parish church were also travelling to different churches in order either to hear sermons or perhaps to receive communion from clergymen who did not insist that communicants knelt to receive the sacrament.

Occasionally, rather than attending a different church, parishioners attempted to disrupt services. Edward Spurke of the Laudian parish of West Bergholt, for example, was presented for ‘disturbing the minister and the congregation in the time of preaching’ in March 1627.⁸⁴ And Thomas Sharpe, Tabitha Sharpe and Anna Wittam of Sandon were presented in November 1636 ‘for refusing to bow at the blessed name of Jesus, or to stand up at the creed ... but do scoff at the minister and others that do.’⁸⁵ Tabitha Sharpe of Sandon also expressed her feelings about conformity by refusing to attend church to give thanks for the birth of her child. Maria Thom of South Ockenden also refused to be churched.⁸⁶ Three men from Great Holland were presented to the Commissary Court in 1639 for being married at Little Holland by Mr. Newton rather than in their home parish.⁸⁷ They may have decided to get married elsewhere because they did not approve of the way in which their minister, Edward Cherry, conducted the marriage service for, as we have seen, Puritan nonconformists in Radwinter objected to the manner in which Richard Drake conducted weddings.

Obviously there were also many incidents of individuals refusing to receive communion. Lay people from the Laudian-led parishes of Danbury, Great Chishall, Great Holland, Little Tey, Manuden, Theydon Garnon, West Bergholt and White Colne were presented for failing to receive communion but their motives are not

⁸³ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 108v

⁸⁴ ERO D/ACA 41, f. 74v, D/ACA 43, f. 96v, D/ACA 45, f. 276r

⁸⁵ ERO D/AEA 41, 103v

⁸⁶ D/AEA 41, f. 163v, D/AEA 40, f. 247v

⁸⁷ *ibid.* ff. 85v, 104v, 197r. Unfortunately nothing definite is known of the beliefs or career of Mr. Newton for no records from Little Holland survive but he may have been the Christopher Newton who obtained his BA from Christ’s College, Cambridge in 1618 and was ordained at Peterborough in the same year. Venn, Part 1, Volume III, p. 251

specified.⁸⁸ Occasionally, though, more information is provided about the offence. Henry Watson and Edward Keeling of High Ongar, for example, were charged with refusing to kneel to receive the sacrament in September 1629.⁸⁹ Another Watson, John of Chrishall, who found himself before the Bishop of London's Commissary Court in 1638, seems to have been an opponent of Laudianism rather than simply of conformity. He was accused of not receiving communion from the rail, although in a highly unusual development one of the churchwardens vouched that, contrary to the word of the minister, Watson had received the sacrament. Was the churchwarden attempting to protect a fellow anti-Laudian?⁹⁰ Watson was not the only man in Chrishall for whom the issue of receiving the sacrament was a contentious one. Several of his fellow parishioners found themselves denied the sacrament by their minister Thomas King because although they were prepared to kneel they were not prepared to do so before the altar rails.⁹¹ The issue of communion rose in a different way on two separate occasions. In 1638 George Aylett and John Eve of Hallingbury were presented for not providing enough wine for the communion and in 1639 two parishioners from Chrishall were charged with failing to pay towards the bread and wine for the communion. Both may have been attempts to hinder the minister from giving the sacrament.⁹²

In a few parishes, parishioners expressed their disapproval of their minister and his chosen form of worship by attempting to have him indicted at either the church or the secular courts. For example, Thomas Wiborow of Pebmarsh was indicted at the Chelmsford Assizes in March 1640 for refusing 'for no cause' to give communion to Alicia Cooke 'although she presented herself reverently on her knees'.⁹³ Alicia Cooke was clearly not a Puritan nonconformist, because if she had

⁸⁸ ERO D/ALV 2, f. 2v-r, A/ABA 8, f. 55v, D/ACA 43, f. 90v, D/ACA 44, f. 134r, D/ACA 50, f. 133v, D/ACA 52, ff. 199r, 258v, D/ACA 53, f. 195v, D/AEA 35, f. 51v, D/AEA 37, f. 174v, D/AEA 38, ff. 70r, 198r, D/AEA 40, f. 224v, 247v, D/AEA 41, f. 249r.

⁸⁹ ERO D/AEA 37, 174r

⁹⁰ ERO D/ABA 9, ff. 55v, 88v

⁹¹ White, p. 21

⁹² ERO D/ABA 9, ff. 7r, 153r

⁹³ ERO AF 35.81/H 9

been she would not have been prepared to kneel at all. It seems likely that what she was objecting to was the Laudian requirement that she kneel before the altar rails and that because she refused so to do Wiborow would not administer the sacrament to her. Whatever Wiborow's reasons for his refusal, they clearly did not convince the court, for he was found guilty of the offence. The prosecution and the jury in the case against Thomas Wiborow were, in supporting Alicia Cooke, defending Prayer Book Protestantism but opposing Laudianism. The vicar and churchwardens of Danbury encountered quite different attitudes when they were presented to the Quarter Sessions in October 1641. At that time, an attempt was made to indict the vicar, Clement Vincent, for wearing a surplice and hood. The case, which must have been brought by nonconformists, was apparently dismissed by a court satisfied with the Prayer Book ceremonies. The tolerance of the court extended further, though, for they also dismissed the case against Robert Audley and Alexander Thisillthaught, Vincent's churchwardens, who were accused of 'not plucking up the rails about the communion table in Danbury Church beingg a great grievance to the people.'⁹⁴

In some parishes in Essex opposition to the altar rails was more violently expressed. At least four of the parishes in which the altar rails were forcibly removed had a Laudian minister but there is no discernible pattern which explains why the rails were torn up in some churches but not in others. In 1640 the rails in Elmstead church were pulled up and burnt by Derrick Laggyn of the parish of Elmstead and seven unnamed men.⁹⁵ In the same year, a group of local servants and apprentices removed and burnt the rails at Latton.⁹⁶ As has already been mentioned, the rails were taken up at Kelvedon Easterford in July 1640 by three local men and at Radwinter in the same month by a mixture of locals and troops. No such numbers were required at Chelmsford. A single man, Samuel Ferman, removed the rails from the church in that

⁹⁴ ERO Q/SR 314/60, 61. Both presentments were crossed through, which would seem to suggest that they were not successful.

⁹⁵ ERO Q/SR 311/49, 52, 53

⁹⁶ A. Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War*, (London, 1981), p. 109

town.⁹⁷ This seems to have been the only occasion on which a person acted alone to remove the altar rails, it was usually done by a group of people. For example, two husbandmen from Stisted and a labourer from Bocking tore out the rails at Bradwell by Coggeshall on August 2nd 1640.⁹⁸ Sixteen days later four men, two each from Chich St. Osyth and Great Clacton, removed the rails at Great Holland church. Thomas Spencer, who had helped to pull up the rails at Great Holland, was also one of the three labourers presented for tearing up the rails in his own church at Chich St. Osyth. William Rich, Robert Tompson, Richard Goberd and Isaac Starling gave evidence against the men who removed the rails from the churches at Chich St. Osyth and Great Holland. Their reasons for doing so are not explained in the surviving records but it is possible that they were Laudians, appalled by the destruction of the rails.⁹⁹ The rails at Great Braxted fell victim to the wrath of eight men, seven from Essex and one from Suffolk, at about the same time as those at Chich St. Osyth and Great Holland were removed.¹⁰⁰ All the examples already given are of men removing altar rails but they were not the only ones to become involved in this activity. On February 2nd 1641 a group of what Humphrey Mildmay describes as ‘helly wives’ pulled up and burnt the rails at Sandon.¹⁰¹ There was what Humphrey Mildmay only refers to as ‘disorder’ when the communion was administered at Danbury in April 1641.¹⁰² Troops also became involved in this particular form of iconoclasm. It was they who were responsible for the removal of the altar rails from in and around Braintree, Colchester and Saffron Waldon.¹⁰³ Altar rails were not the only targets for iconoclasts. In Chigwell troops destroyed what are described as ‘images’ and broke all the stained glass windows showing pictures of the crucifixion.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ ERO Q/SR 311/14

⁹⁸ ERO Q/SR 311/47

⁹⁹ ERO Q/SR 311/50, 51

¹⁰⁰ ERO Q/SR 311/48

¹⁰¹ BL Harleian MS 454, f. 39v

¹⁰² *ibid.*, f. 40r

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, f. 89v

¹⁰⁴ BL Add. MS 21935, f. 89v

Violence was not only directed at altar rails and images, at unspecified times during the 1640s, some ministers were threatened, intimidated or attacked. Nine out of twelve of the ministers known to have suffered in this way were Laudians. Erasmus Laud of Little Tey was robbed of his cattle and twenty pounds. He was not related to William Laud but the coincidence of name had apparently made him a target. To compound his misfortune he did not receive any sympathy when he reported the names of his attackers to the authorities in Colchester. Alderman Daniel Cole, one of the men who had given so much trouble to Thomas Newcomen, told him that ‘they knew him and his cause ... [and] they could not hear him’. Edward Cherry was forced to flee from the rectory at Great Holland. Edward Thurman, rector of Great Hallingbury, was attacked in his parish church as he tried to christen a child. A group of Parliamentary volunteers disrupted a service given by Wiborow at Pebmarsh and later assaulted him in the churchyard. As mentioned above, Thomas Newcomen was attacked with ‘cudgels and halberts’ and then thrown into Colchester gaol. One hundred people from Colchester and Coggeshall plundered the house of Edward Symmonds of Rayne.¹⁰⁵ From July 1642 onwards the authority of Brian Walton of Sandon was almost entirely undermined by a lecturer who took it upon himself not only to deliver sermons in the parish but also to perform baptisms and burials.¹⁰⁶ What were mockingly described as ‘the Gods’ of Robert Warren, rector of Borley, were stolen from his house in his other cure, Long Melford in Suffolk. The rector himself was jostled by a hostile crowd.¹⁰⁷ There was a riot when Christopher Newsted arrived in Stisted in 1642 which culminated in his new parishioners denying him entry to the church and rectory.¹⁰⁸ The attacks described above were all on Laudian ministers and may have had dislike of the innovations of the 1630s at their

¹⁰⁵ Ryves, pp. 12, 13, 15, 18, 36, 124.

¹⁰⁶ Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 299

¹⁰⁷ J. Parker, *The History of Long Melford*, (London, 1873), pp. 155-6; Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 303

¹⁰⁸ J. Sharpe, ‘Scandalous and Malignant Priests in Essex: the impact of Grassroots Puritanism’, in C. Jones, M. Newitt and S. Roberts, (eds), *Politics and People in Revolutionary England*, (Oxford, 1986), p. 259

root. Certainly it is suggestive that such a large proportion of those attacked were Laudians.

It was not only Laudians who were unpopular, though, as the examples of the remaining three ministers attacked show. John Cornelius, the conformist parson of Peldon was robbed and the house of another conformist, Gabriel Honifold of Ardleigh, was looted. Honifold himself was physically intimidated by a crowd of people when he tried to go and make a complaint to Alderman Daniel Cole. The Prayer Book Protestant John Michaelson of Chelmsford also encountered difficulties.¹⁰⁹ Michaelson, a Scot, held two parishes in Essex, Asheldham and Chelmsford. Although he had been minister at both parishes since 1628, Michaelson's difficulties did not begin until the 1640s. The attacks he then suffered make it clear that he had aroused ire through his obedience to the Prayer Book and by wearing a surplice and thus serve as a reminder that the pre-Laudian ceremonies were almost as unpopular as the innovations of the 1630s. The attacks on Michaelson began when he was assaulted and his surplice torn off by a group of angry townspeople. After that incident most of Michaelson's problems were caused by the soldiers from Colchester and Ipswich who were staying in the town. They attended Michaelson's services and those of his curate but wore hats in church and shouted and talked throughout. They also destroyed the Book of Common Prayer and carried the pieces in triumph through the town. On another occasion, a number of the troops threw Michaelson into a newly dug grave. Finally, some of the soldiers carried Michaelson from his house to a specially built pyre on which they apparently would have thrown him were it not for the intervention both of his friends and of the commanders of the troops.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Michaelson signed the petition in support of the nonconformist Thomas Hooker in 1629 (PRO SP/16/151) and was accused during the 1630s of not attending public lectures until after the prayers had been read (Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 201). It should not, however, be thought that Michaelson was a nonconformist for in 1620 he wrote a defence of kneeling at communion (J. Michaelson, *The Lawfulness of Kneeling in the Act of Receiving the Lord's Supper*, (St. Andrews, 1620)) and, as the evidence above demonstrates, he continued to use the surplice and the Prayer Book even in the 1640s. (Ryves, pp. 22-26).

¹¹⁰ Ryves, pp. 22-26

Ministers were not alone in being intimidated and attacked. Some ecclesiastical patrons were also targets in the 1640s. Sir John Lucas's house in Colchester was broken into and Lucas, his sister and his mother taken to Colchester gaol by a crowd armed with guns, swords and halberts. The house of Sir Henry Audley, situated just outside Colchester, was looted. This may have been because he was a patron of the unpopular, but probably conformist, rather than Laudian, Theophilus Roberts who was the main subject of the libellous verse which also condemned Thomas Newcomen. Goods were stolen from the Essex residence of the Catholic Elizabeth Savage, Countess Rivers.¹¹¹ The Rivers family were absent at the time of the theft but were tracked down to the Countess's house at Long Melford in Suffolk and it was reported that the Countess barely escaped with her life from the encounter that occurred there.¹¹²

Important as the attacks on patrons and ministers are, it must be remembered that lay people did not only express their grievances through violence; a number of lay people chose instead to demonstrate their displeasure by petitioning one of the committees for 'scandalous ministers' for the removal of their clergyman. For the benefit of the committees, lay people outlined their specific grievances against their pastor in a series of depositions. As explained in the introduction, the depositions were highly varied but with recurring themes. Now it can be seen that the issues to which lay men and women returned time and again before the committees of the 1640s, the Prayer Book ceremonies, the Laudian innovations, were those which caused conflict and disagreement in the parishes in the 1630s. In other words, these findings demonstrate that although the depositions stemmed from the political situation of the 1640s they had their roots in earlier parochial conflicts.

The problem with this line of argument is, of course, that a sequestration does not always seem to have been preceded by conflict within the parish. However, it must be remembered that the surviving evidence is by no means complete and so does

¹¹¹ For evidence of the Elizabeth Savage's Catholicism see ERO Q'SR 317/34

¹¹² Ryves, pp. 3, 12, 14; Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 63

not provide a full picture. For example, most of the records for the archdeaconry of Middlesex have been destroyed, perhaps along with evidence of disputes in the eighteen Laudian parishes in that archdeaconry. A non-resident or regularly absent minister could also explain a lack of conflict. Brian Walton of Sandon was a pluralist and thus is likely to have been regularly absent from that parish which could explain why little conflict was reported there.¹¹³ Seven benefices in Essex and Suffolk were not occupied by Laudian ministers until 1637 or afterwards and thus there was little time for conflict to occur or develop in these parishes.¹¹⁴ In Fyfield and Witham the churchwardens seem to have supported the anti-Laudians within the parish by refusing to present them to the archdeaconry courts. It may be that these were not the only parishes in which churchwardens supported campaigns of opposition towards Laudianism. It is also possible that some ministers were reluctant to present those who opposed them for fear of exacerbating existing conflict.

It should be noted at this point that opposition to Laudianism fell into two distinct periods, the first of passive hostility and the second of active resistance, not because of a well co-ordinated master plan but because of the changes in the national situation. In the 1630s the opponents of Laudianism showed relatively restrained attitudes to the practices they disliked. The evidence suggests that only fairly small numbers of people became involved in conflicts and these conflicts rarely involved anyone outside the parish. Even in those parishes in which the congregation had resisted the railing in of the altar, the table and the rails remained unmolested once installed. Iconoclasm and violence were rare. This was mainly because at this time Laudianism had the support of the most powerful forces in the country: the monarchy, the archbishop of Canterbury, most of the bishops and the courts. An apparently more widespread and certainly a more violently expressed hostility towards Laudianism did not emerge until 1640 and afterwards. It is no coincidence that it was during this time that members elected to the Short and Long Parliaments expressed anti-Laudian

¹¹³ Matthews, p. 61

¹¹⁴ White, pp. 21, 29; Matthews, 147, 149, 160, 162, 168

attitudes, and passed bills aimed at removing all vestiges of Laudianism from churches.¹¹⁵

Yet all this talk of conflict and disagreement should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the evidence indicates that no more than a minority of people actively opposed the Prayer Book ceremonies or Laudianism. Of course, the evidence is not infallible. No doubt not all those who refused to attend church or to receive communion were presented to the courts but, on the other hand, not all of those who refused to attend church would have done so because they opposed conformity or Laudianism. Some were simply troublemakers, malcontents or apathetic. John Ayly of Kelvedon Easterford, for example, who was one of the men who pulled up the rails at that church, was a habitual troublemaker.¹¹⁶ However, it should not be assumed that the majority of those who created problems for Laudian ministers were simply troublemakers. The actions of Samuel Burrows of St. Runwald's, Colchester, show him to be a committed Puritan. His ally, Daniel Cole, was respected member of the Colchester community of which he was to become mayor. John Furley, another man who opposed Newcomen, also became mayor of Colchester suggesting that his status was similar to that of Cole.¹¹⁷ Elizabeth Cudmore was a member of what was to become one of the most important gentry families in Kelvedon Easterford. Jeremy Aylett of the same parish was also a member of a respected gentry family. Neither was, in any sense of the word, troublemakers.¹¹⁸ John Wood of Kelvedon Easterford had been a constable, a churchwarden and an overseer of the poor and so was clearly a respected member of the community.¹¹⁹ John Osbourne and David Lambe of Tollesbury were both yeoman.¹²⁰ Robert Ashwell and George Ramsey of Fyfield and Richard Durden of Radwinter were all churchwardens and thus it would seem likely

¹¹⁵ For more information on attitudes expressed during the Parliaments see Fletcher, *Outbreak*, pp.xix-xxx

¹¹⁶ Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn, (ed) *Crime in England*, p. 105

¹¹⁷ B. Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, (London, 1985), p. 132

¹¹⁸ Sharpe 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn, *Crime in England*, p. 105

¹¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 95

¹²⁰ ERO D/ABW 50.249, D/ABR 8/188

that they were people who took their religion extremely seriously. It is equally difficult to believe that lay men and women who refused to kneel at the altar rails to receive communion or who walked, perhaps at some considerable inconvenience to themselves, to churches outside their own parish to hear sermons, did not have a strong religious faith. In other words, there were troublemakers who became caught up in the anti-Laudian reaction but the majority of anti-Laudians were respected or at very least respectable members of society who opposed Laudianism because their religious convictions dictated that they should.

But what exactly were these religious convictions? Inevitably, they varied, at least a little, from person to person. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some broad conclusions about the religious convictions that lay behind the disputes of the 1620s, 1630s and 1640s. It is likely that a few of those who came into conflict with Laudian ministers were sectarians. For example, Elizabeth Fuller of Kelvedon Easterford was an anabaptist by 1640 and she may also have held these views during the 1630s when she was presented three times for absence from her parish church.¹²¹ It is likely that Thomas Lamb of St. Giles', Colchester was a Baptist.¹²² Those accused of hedge preaching may have been sectarians, although people such as Thomas Sanders, Richard Woolbull and Thomas Chreshoell are elusive figures about whom nothing of relevance can be discovered. The extreme religious beliefs of the sectarians were not shared by the Puritan nonconformists, but the latter opposed Laudianism as vehemently as the separatists. Puritan nonconformists had, of course, refused to accept all the rituals and practices of the Church of England long before the introduction of the Laudian innovations. So, whilst they would inevitably have hated the changes of the 1630s, Laudianism was not the root of their discontent, it merely confirmed and exacerbated their reservations about the Church of England. Both for this reason and because of their relatively large numbers, Puritan nonconformists were the most visible opponents of Laudianism in Essex and Suffolk. However, the

¹²¹ Sharpe, 'Crime and Delinquency' in Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England*, p. 106

¹²² Spyvee, p. 14

presence of such high profile figures as Samuel Burrows, Daniel Cole and John Furley¹²³ should not be allowed to obscure the fact that they are not representative of all who opposed Laudianism. The evidence indicates that some of these opponents, people such as Jeremy Aylett of Witham, Henry Coote and his associates in Radwinter, the lay people at Great Chishall and Chrishall who were prepared to kneel but not before the altar rails and Alicia Cooke of Pebmarsh, found fault only with the Laudian innovations and were not seeking a wider reformation of the Church. They were, in other words, Prayer Book Protestants.

There is other evidence of support for the Prayer Book ceremonies in Essex, in the form of two petitions both addressed to the King. The first petition, which is dated 3rd November 1641, is described as being from ‘divers of the justices of peace and gentrie with divers inhabitants of the county of Essex both clargy and layetie’, the second was apparently from ‘divers justices of the peace’. The names of those who signed the petitions have not survived but a copy of each document is extant. The first petition requested that the Book of Common Prayer be ‘maintained’ in the Church of England and ‘those that deprave itt ... punished’. In addition the petitioners listed their grievances in note form: ‘the administration of the sacraments in an extemporarie way ... Some refusing to have their children christened if they may not prescribe the way ... Some preaching the Book of Common Praier an idoll ... Some burneing the booke saying itt is a popish book ... Some bringing a horse into church when the minister was preaching ... Some breaking downe windows as well white glass as painted ... Seditions and sectaries [and] a multitude never coming to church’. These grievances seem to have been specific rather than general for next to the complaint about the administration of the sacrament the scribe wrote ‘Tarling, Stisted’, thereby conveying the impression that he was particularly concerned about the practice in these two villages. Similarly, one Mr. Burrows (Samuel?) is named as having prescribed the way in which his child should be christened. John Stalham,

¹²³ Furley and his family were Presbyterians during the first half of the seventeenth century and only later became Quakers. Reay, *Quakers*, pp. 16, 72, 132

vicar of Terling, is accused of having condemned the Prayer Book as an idol and Hawsted is named as the place at which the Prayer Book was burned. It is noted too that the horse was brought into Halstead church while Mr. John Eddrige, the minister there, was preaching. The second petition, which is not dated, is couched in slightly different terms from the first but makes very similar requests and complaints.¹²⁴ Neither petition mentions the Laudian innovations but this does not necessarily mean that they were signed only by Prayer Book Protestants. Laudians also desired the retention of the Prayer Book and may have supported the petitions despite their containing no reference to the innovations of the 1630s. As Tyacke has noted of the University of Oxford in the early 1640s: 'episcopalians of every hue banded together in defence of the institutional being of the church.'¹²⁵ If they could do so in Oxford, why not in Essex? In other words, the petitions should not be interpreted simply as evidence of opposition to Laudianism because they may well have been signed by Laudians and Prayer Book Protestants alike.

Amongst those who may have signed the petitions are Robert Aylett, William, Lord Maynard, Sir Humphrey Mildmay and Sir John Lucas. They were the foremost lay Laudians in Essex and it is worth devoting some space to their beliefs. Robert Aylett is perhaps best remembered as the author of a collection of pious, religious poems. However, writing was by no means his only occupation. Aylett was also the Bishop of London's commissary and an official within the archdeaconry of Colchester. In these roles, Aylett provided vociferous support for the Laudian Thomas Newcomen. Perhaps more importantly, he demonstrated his commitment to the policy of railing in altarwise communion tables by issuing and enforcing an order to that effect within the Archdeaconry of Colchester in January 1636.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ LRO DE 221/13/2/26. John Eddrige resigned the living of Halsted, which he had held since c. 1590, in 1641. Newcourt, p. 299

¹²⁵ N. Tyacke, 'Religious Controversy' in N. Tyacke, (ed) *The History of the University of Oxford, Volume II: Seventeenth Century Oxford*, (Oxford, 1997), p. 591

¹²⁶ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 208; Prynne, *A Quenche-Coale*, pp. 353-4; Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 60

One of Aylett's poems described a stained glass window showing the crucifixion of Christ. This window was the centrepiece of the chapel built in 1621 by another Essex Laudian, William, Lord Maynard, at Easton Lodge. Maynard appointed the Laudian John Browning to the living of Great Easton in Essex. Browning, who had led the campaign against the Puritan Thomas Hooker, described Lord Maynard as his 'most noble, free and bountiful patron'. Whether or not Maynard returned this respect is not known but the fact that he believed in the potential universality of God's grace, built and beautified two chapels in Essex, was close friends with William Laud and attended many of Browning sermons and services certainly suggests that he would not only have respected but also have shared Browning's Laudianism.¹²⁷

Sir Humphrey Mildmay left a relatively detailed diary for the period 1633-1651, yet his beliefs are elucidated in little more detail than those of William, Lord Maynard. The diary contains no declaration of religion or indeed extensive discussion of the subject. Mildmay's beliefs have to be pieced together from a handful of notes and comments which must be studied in their correct context so that they do not mislead. For example, both on February 28th and April 4th 1635 Mildmay records that he had visited the Puritan John Bastwick, who was at that time being held in the gatehouse at the Tower of London. On the former occasion, Mildmay noted that Bastwick had given him one of his books, however, he did not give the title of the book and at no point in the diary did he indicate that he had read the volume.¹²⁸ This last piece of information is important because although Mildmay may have been a friend to Bastwick in 1635, he had never supported his religious position. On one Friday in 1634 Mildmay criticised his own sister, with whom he had dined, for serving 'a dinner of flesh like a Puritan'.¹²⁹ On February 6th 1636, after a visit to St. John's, Clerkenwell in London, he wrote with some disgust that 'the

¹²⁷ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 192-4; Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, sig. A4

¹²⁸ BL Harleian MS 454, ff. 10r, 11r

¹²⁹ *ibid*, f. 9v

parson preached in the afternoon like a Puritan'.¹³⁰ By 1637 Mildmay's dislike of all things Puritan had clearly been expanded to include Bastwick for he wrote of listening to 'the wicked cause of Prynne' and noted laconically on June 4th 1637: 'I saw the three men in pillory, came home, dined'. Of course, a dislike of Puritanism does not necessarily indicate a liking for Laudianism. Mildmay's Laudianism can only be established with reference to other evidence, for example, the way in which he used his powers of patronage. Mildmay had the right to appoint to two livings in Essex: Great Parndon and Danbury. He appointed William Osbolston and Clement Vincent respectively to these livings, the former in 1610 and the latter in 1628. Of the two men only one, Clement Vincent, was a Laudian in the 1630s. The evidence for Osbolston's beliefs confirms only that he was an enthusiastic Prayer Book Protestant.¹³¹ Of course, our evidence for Osbolston's beliefs may be defective for, as has been demonstrated earlier in this thesis, not all Laudians can be identified as such from the depositions against them. Alternatively our sources could be wholly accurate; Osbolston may never have become a Laudian. If this is the case, it could explain why, whilst he maintained a good relationship with Mildmay, staying as a guest at his house in London and borrowing books from him, he never achieved the closeness to his patron that Vincent did. The parson at Danbury was a frequent guest not only at Mildmay's home in his parish but also at his residence in London. More importantly, he seems to have established a real *rapport* with Mildmay.¹³² Remembering Mildmay's friendship with Bastwick, it is important to stress that his personal relationships did not necessarily reflect his religious beliefs. Nevertheless, it is surely significant both that Mildmay regularly mentioned attending and communicating at Danbury church without ever finding fault with Vincent's services or sermons and that the two men were still close in 1642 at a time when many people were shunning or attacking Laudian ministers.¹³³ It may also be relevant that

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, f. 14r

¹³¹ White, 37

¹³² *ibid.*, ff. 5r, 6r, 17r, 20r, 22r, 29r, 31v, 32r, 54r

¹³³ *ibid.*, ff. 29v, 32r, 40r, 47r, 54r. Mildmay did, by contrast, comment unfavourably upon the

Mildmay thought sufficiently highly of Brian Walton, the Laudian minister of Sandon in Essex, to travel to that town occasionally to attend Walton's services.¹³⁴ More important than any of this is the indication given by Mildmay on February 20th 1640 that he was a supporter of the altar rails. On that day he recorded that: 'the helly wives of Sandon put down the rails of the church and burnt them on the green' and asked God 'to send them a day of payment'.¹³⁵

Sir John Lucas, who merits the occasional mention in Mildmay's diary,¹³⁶ seems to have shared the diarist's sympathy for Laudianism, perhaps as a result of the influence of his childhood tutor, the anti-Calvinist Samuel Harsnett. Lucas's religious leanings are indicated not so much by the decision to present the Laudian Samuel Cock to the living of St. Giles', Colchester as by his choice of Thomas Newcomen, the most notorious Laudian in Essex, as his chaplain. Again, the patron and his clergymen remained close during the 1640s and indeed were together when attacked in the early part of that decade by the hostile crowd of anti-Laudians.¹³⁷

Why did people accept Laudianism? Did an enthusiasm for the Prayer Book ceremonies predispose people to an acceptance of Laudianism, as Christopher Haigh has suggested? Surely this is too simplistic to suggest that this group provided 'the parochial foundations upon which the Laudian church was built' for, as Judith Maltby has concluded and this study has further demonstrated, many of those who supported the Prayer Book ceremonies heartily disapproved of Laudianism.¹³⁸ Alexandra Walsham's balanced view that to an extent both Haigh and Maltby are correct seems likely to be closest to the truth.¹³⁹ In other words, it is probable that a few Prayer Book Protestants embraced Laudianism for its increased emphasis on reverence and

sermons delivered by other clergymen. He commented on January 4th 1635 that Henry Goodcole, the curate of St. James, Clerkenwell 'fooled in the pulpit for preach he cannot'. (f. 9r.) and complained on November 17th 1640 the Dr. James Sibbalt 'preached very long and late' (f. 37v).

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, f. 43v. Mildmay also occasionally attended the services of John Michaelson of Chelmsford.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, f. 39v

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, f. 30r

¹³⁷ Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 179; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 164-5, 181; Ryves, p. 2

¹³⁸ C. Haigh, 'The Church, the Catholics and the People' in Haigh (ed), *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, p. 219; J. Maltby 'By this Book' in Fincham (ed), *Early Stuart Church*, p. 117

¹³⁹ Walsham, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism', p. 636

the beauty of holiness but the surviving evidence documents only those who rejected it on the grounds that it was a step too far in the direction of Catholicism.

Those who tolerated or supported Laudianism may be less prominent in the historical records than the men and women who became involved in conflicts with Laudian ministers but they undoubtedly existed and should not be forgotten. It is necessary, however, to return for a moment to the parochial disputes of the 1630s. Many of those were provoked by a dislike of Prayer Book ceremonies. These conflicts were simply a continuation of the decades old arguments about the use of the surplice, the use of the sign of the cross in baptism and the necessity or otherwise of kneeling to receive the communion. The antagonists in these debates were always Puritans. These Puritans were exercised too by the Laudian innovations and became involved in disputes that related to specifically Laudian issues, such as the altar rails. These last disputes, coupled with a hatred of the Prayer Book ceremonies, should be seen as clear precedents for the violence, iconoclasm and invective which was to be directed against Laudians and Laudianism in the 1640s, for these emanated from, even if they did not directly involve, Puritans. But Laudian clergymen did not have to contend only with those whose wrath extended to aspects of pre-Laudian conformity; they faced opposition as well from Prayer Book Protestants. In other words, Laudianism not only generated hostility which would not otherwise have existed, it also aggravated the hostility towards the Church of England of sectarians and Puritan nonconformists. It would, though, be an exaggeration to claim that the evidence indicates that Laudianism was 'profoundly offensive to most lay ... opinion',¹⁴⁰ the evidence indicates only that Laudianism was profoundly offensive to some lay opinion. This is not to undermine the significance of anti-Laudianism among the laity in the localities. It should be pointed out that the evidence collected in this chapter demonstrates that when the House of Commons issued instructions on 1st September 1641 that the communion table was to be taken away from the east wall, the rails were

¹⁴⁰ Morrill, 'Religious Context'. p. 163

to be removed and the chancel levelled they were following, rather than leading, a strand of public opinion. Laudianism was not merely an issue brought to prominence by Parliamentarians, it was already a cause of civil unrest in Essex. Of course, Laudianism was a focus for some lay discontent and unrest but there were lay people who accepted, tolerated and supported Laudianism. Therefore, pre-Civil War Essex should not be thought of simply as 'the heartland of parliamentarianism and Puritanism'.¹⁴¹ It should be recognised that Laudianism too was a strong religious influence with both clerical and lay support.

¹⁴¹ Morrill, *The Revolt of the Provinces*, p. 38

LIST OF LAUDIAN CLERGYMEN AND THEIR PATRONS¹⁴²

Clergyman	Living	Patron
Peter Allen	Tollesbury	John Freshwater and Thomas Freshwater
John Alsop	Fordham	John Lucas
Edward Alston	Pentlow	Francis Danyel
Alexander Bonyman	Kelvedon Easterford	William Laud, bishop of London
	Pleshy	Patron unknown
John Browning	Great Easton	William, Lord Maynard
	Rawreth	Patron unknown
John Chamberlin	Little Maplestead	Patron unknown
Edward Cherry	Great Holland	Thomas, earl Rivers
	St. Osyth	Thomas, earl Rivers
Timothy Clay	Wickham St. Paul	Patron unknown
Samuel Cock	St. Giles', Colchester	Sir John Lucas
John Cross	Gosfield	Patron unknown
Thomas Darnell	Thorpe-Le-Soken	Thomas Darcy
Richard Drake	Radwinter	Roger Drake
William Frost	Middleton	Nicholas Bacon
Robert Guyon	White Colne	Patron unknown
Timothy Heard	Takeley	William Laud, Bishop of London
Gregory Holland	West Bergholt	Edward, earl of Dorset
Edward Jenkinson	Panfield	John Jarnegan
Thomas King	Chrishall	Patron unknown
	Great Chishall	Patron unknown
John Jegon	Sible Hedingham	John Jegon
John Lake	Great Saling	Henry Maxey
Erasmus Laud	Little Tey	William Laud, Bishop of London
Joseph Long	Fingringhoe	Thomas, Earl Rivers
	Great Clacton	Thomas, Earl Rivers
John Mow	Bardfield	Stephen Hunt and John Thayer
Thomas Newcomen	Holy Trinity, Colchester	Charles I
	Saint Runwald's, Colchester	Patron unknown
Alexander Read	Fyfield	Robert, earl of Warwick
Edward Shephard	Maplestead	Thomas Shepherd
John Simpson	Mount Bures	Richard, earl of Dorset
Robert Snell	Matching	Patron unknown
Samuel Sowthen	Manuden	George James
Edward Thurman	Great Hallingbury	Thomas Hone
Edward Turner	St. Lawrence	Charles I

¹⁴² The source for this table is Newcourt's *Repertorium*

Clement Vincent	Danbury	Sir Humphrey Mildmay
Brian Walton	Sandon	Charles I
Robert Warren	Borley	Sir Thomas Savage
Jeffrey Watts	Clavering	Patron unknown
	Great Leighs	John Watts
Daniel Whitby	Theydon Mount	Charles I
Thomas Wiborow	Pebmarsh	Charles I
Thomas Wilson	Wimbish	James I
	Debden	Robert Nowell
Stephen Withers	Kelvedon Hatch	John Wright
	Sheering	Anthony Luther
Francis Wright	Witham	William Laud, Bishop of London
Nicholas Wright	Theydon Garnon	Stephen Thelvall

CHAPTER SIX: LAY ATTITUDES TO PURITANISM IN ESSEX

Historians who have written about Puritanism in early modern Essex, for all they may give slightly different definitions of the term, tend to argue that its influence was marked and its popularity significant.¹ The sources, such as the church court records, of which these historians make use, present only a partial picture of religious life in Essex for dissent and nonconformity were brought to the attention of the authorities in a way that obedience and conformity were not. That having been said, Puritanism, like Laudianism, had a definite impact within the county. There were at least thirty six beneficed Puritan ministers working in Essex during the 1630s. In addition, there was a relatively large number of Puritan lecturers active in the county, including such prominent figures as Matthew Newcomen, Richard Blackerby and Edward Sparrowhawke. Patrons such as the earl of Warwick, Sir Thomas Masham, Katherine Barnardiston and the Barrington family, also ensured that Puritanism had a high profile within the county. Perhaps as importantly, less well known lay Puritans gathered to hear sermons given by Puritan ministers or disrupted the services of conformist or Laudian clergymen. These historical truths must not, however, be allowed to dominate the picture of Puritanism in Essex. There is no evidence that Puritanism was the religion of the majority in the county or even that its popularity outweighed its unpopularity. It is necessary to look beneath the surface of easily identifiable acceptance and support in order to gauge the reactions of the vast majority of people towards Puritanism. As such an examination is best carried out with reference to court records and wills, it will serve as a counterpart to the study of lay attitudes to Laudianism. In other words, it will be a comparative study of the nature and extent of support for and opposition towards Puritanism, the aim of which will be not simply to recount incidents of opposition or support but also to look at the people and, more importantly, the motives that lay behind such initiatives.

¹ Davids, *Annals*, pp. 172-182; Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 87; Smith, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 6-20; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 50-54, 235-245

Drawing conclusions about lay peoples' reactions towards clerical Puritanism is, in a sense, more complicated than explaining peoples' reactions towards Laudianism. This is because Puritanism took two different forms. On the one hand, there were the moderate Puritans. They were deeply pious individuals distinguished in particular by the emphasis on 'painful preaching' and Bible study. Although active in promoting Puritanism in the decades following the personal rule, they were prepared largely to conform during the 1630s, believing that although it was their duty to advocate further reformation, it was also their duty to abide by ecclesiastical law. Puritan nonconformists, on the other hand, were not constrained by feelings of loyalty or obedience to the Church of England. On the contrary, they believed that it was imperative that they actively oppose those ceremonies they wished to see eradicated. Unlike their moderate counterparts they were not prepared to tolerate the use of the surplice, the use of the sign of the cross in baptism, kneeling at the sacrament or the churching of women. Since these two types of Puritans were so different in their approach, it will be necessary to examine separately the reactions each provoked.

It is probable that there were many more moderate Puritan ministers working in Essex in the 1630s than can be identified today. For example, at least some of those clergymen who retained their benefices during the 1640s and worked during the Interregnum must have been sympathetic towards Puritanism. Unfortunately though, only those who both conformed in the pre-Civil War period and promoted or actively supported further reformation in the following years can be with certainty labelled moderate Puritans. More frustratingly, the most well known moderate Puritan in Essex, Samuel Collins, held the benefice of Braintree, which fell within the archdeaconry of Middlesex, an area for which very few records survive. This means that it is possible to learn relatively little about the relationship Collins had with his parishioners. The sum total that can be established about the situation in Braintree can be set down in a few lines. Collins certainly had supporters within his congregation, amongst whom were Matthew Wright and Elizabeth Bernard both of

whom bequeathed their clergyman twenty shillings. The vicar of Braintree also commanded the respect of Nicholas Richold of Coggeshall from whom he received a bequest of forty shillings in 1635.² Those who were unwilling to co-operate with their minister by attending church, paying rates or receiving communion are evident in Braintree too. One of these, Francis Hobday, 'kept company in his house' in preference to frequenting church. It is not known why others refused to attend church but it is possible that some of those who stayed away from their parish church had the sympathy of the churchwardens in so doing for the latter were not apparently inclined to present those whose attendance at divine service was not regular or frequent. It may have been the aim of the churchwardens to protect Puritan nonconformists, men such as Peter Toppam, George Swood, Henry Bateman and John Whayles, who only entered the church after the second lesson had been read, and Andrew Galfraigne who 'affirm[ed] the Book of Common Prayer to be unlawful and refus[ed] to come to divine service'.³

Other parishes in the care of moderate Puritans feature more regularly than Braintree in the church court act books. One of these is the parish of St. Peter's, Colchester which was held by the moderate Puritan Robert Mercer from 1630 to 1645. The first recorded dispute over a religious issue occurred about 3 years after Mercer arrived in the parish, in February 1633. In that month Edward Markhunt and Nicholas Bearon were presented to the archdeaconry court for attending St. Leonard's, Colchester rather than their own parish church.⁴ The choice of St. Leonard's as a place of worship was probably a deliberate one for Jerome Goffe, the rector there, was certainly not a Puritan, moderate or otherwise.⁵ It is certainly plausible that Markhunt and Bearon were conformists who wished to attend services given by a like minded clergyman. Importantly though, there is no evidence that the

² FRC Prob 11/159/55, f. 425v, Prob 11/181/172, f. 275v, Prob 11/168/53, f. 65v

³ ERO D/ABA 7, f. 5v, D/ABA 9, ff. 8r, 41v, 47r, 71v, 74v, 166v, 219v-r, D/ALV 1, f. 40r, D/ALV 2, ff. 57v, 137r

⁴ ERO D/ACA 49, f. 36v

⁵ Goffe was sequestered from his living in the 1640s but the reasons for his sequestration have been lost. Matthews, p. 153

majority of Mercer's detractors were people who objected to Puritanism. In fact some, including the linen draper Thomas Seaward, actively sought further reformation of the Church of England.⁶ Seaward found himself in trouble in April 1635 'for keeping his hatt on his head in the time of divine service at the reading of the first and second lessons in [Holy] Trinity church [Colchester] ... and being asked by some that sat by him to put it off refused to doe so'. Seaward incurred displeasure too for 'refusing to kneele at the communion'.⁷ A year later, Seaward was involved in the attempt to indict the Laudian clergyman of Holy Trinity, Thomas Newcomen, for setting up the altar rails.⁸ Not that the linen draper confined his activities to opposing Thomas Newcomen, he also found time to cause disturbances within the parish of St. Peter's. Before the communion table was railed in there, Seaward found himself before Colchester's archdeaconry court for continually refusing to kneel to receive holy communion and, in view of his reaction when Newcomen added the altar rails at Holy Trinity, it can only be supposed that he was no more co-operative when the rails were erected at St. Peter's.⁹

Seaward was not the only parishioner of St. Peter's who became involved in disputes within other parishes. In June 1635 John Clerk of St. Peter's and four other men from the Colchester area mounted a protest at St. Botolph's church, Colchester. The protest involved the five men sitting on the communion table at St. Botolph's while the minister there delivered his sermon.¹⁰ The act book does not record the men's motivation but since they chose the communion table as the focus of their protest, it is possible that they were attempting to express their disapproval of some aspect of the ceremony of holy communion.¹¹ St. Botolph's would have been the most appropriate church in Colchester in which to conduct such a protest because it was the church in which the mayor and the corporation worshipped on 'Sundays and

⁶ I am grateful to John Walter for drawing my attention to the activities of Thomas Seaward.

⁷ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 115r

⁸ PRO SP 16/499/4

⁹ ERO D/ACA 50, ff. 115r, 127r

¹⁰ It has not proved possible to identify the minister who served St. Botolph's at this time.

¹¹ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 162v

other public occasions'.¹² The dispute would therefore have been witnessed by some of the most powerful political figures in the town.

Not all disputes involving those from St. Peter's were so high profile but some of those with a lesser impact had a more clearly defined motive. For example, it is explicitly stated that Francis Burrows, brother of the more famous Samuel, and also a Puritan nonconformist, refused to receive the sacrament in June 1634 because he did not wish to kneel and it is probable that he only attended his parish church once every six months because he objected to other ceremonies and rituals that were practised there. Nor was Burrows alone in harbouring such objections. Two other parishioners from St. Peter's, whose names are now illegible, were also presented in June 1634 for refusing to kneel.¹³ Furthermore, when Henry King was indicted for not receiving communion in December 1638 he claimed that he had refused so to do because 'his conscience [would] not permitt him to kneel'.¹⁴ Not that Puritan nonconformists only expressed their objections to the Church of England by refusing to kneel; early in 1639 Thomas Tissel wore a hat in church because 'he knew no difference between the church and other places'. Apparently Tissel's mother had a similarly radical opinion of the church for she claimed that the prayers of the church were no more meaningful than 'a ballad'.¹⁵ John Woodhouse, Nicholas Beaton and Richard Green expressed their disapproval not in words but by their actions. All three were presented in March 1639 'for [their] irreverent behaviour in the church in the tyme of divine service, not kneeling at prayers & standing up at the creed and sitting ... with [their] hatt[s] in sermon time'.¹⁶ The Puritan nonconformist views of those named above may also have been shared by some of the other members of the St. Peter's congregation who refused to receive communion, attend their parish church or pay church rates, although, it should not be assumed that all Mercer's opponents were religious radicals

¹² *St. Botolph's Priory and Church*, (a leaflet produced by St. Botolph's church, Colchester, 1998 edition). pp. 1

¹³ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 9r. This was before the railing in of the altar at St. Peter's.

¹⁴ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 124v

¹⁵ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 164r

¹⁶ ERO D/ACA 54, f. 77r

or even that they acted from religious motives. He may have faced opposition from those who were not prepared to tolerate even a moderate Puritan minister and doubtless there were those amongst his congregation who would, for example, have attended the alehouse in preference to their local church.¹⁷ Mercer would have ministered as well to those who were totally satisfied with his conformity as regarded the ceremonies and rituals of the Church of England. Indeed, these are likely to have been the majority of his parishioners.

This is not said in order to undermine the significance of the Puritan nonconformists who opposed Robert Mercer. They assume importance particularly because he was not the only moderate Puritan who found himself unable to elicit co-operation from other Puritans within his parish. John Willis, rector of Ingatestone, who was popular enough to be remembered in forty two percent of all wills made in the parish in the 1630s, was, like Mercer and Samuel Collins of Braintree, opposed by Puritan nonconformists.¹⁸ There were at least eight such individuals active in Ingatestone. They expressed their dislike for the ceremonies of the Church of England by ‘not kneeling at the com[mandments] and not bowing at the sacred name of Jesus’.¹⁹ The experience of Willis shows that moderate Puritans could not always persuade their parishioners to follow their conciliatory lead. The moderate Puritan father and son team, John and Nathaniel Dodd, who were respectively Vicar and Curate of Coggeshall, had the same problem as Willis. In other words, they found that there were many in the congregation more radical than themselves. Amongst this group were the wife of Edmund Frost, who refused in the summer of 1625 to come to church to give thanks for the birth of her child, John Davis, who refused to kneel to

¹⁷ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 38r, D/ACA 53, ff. 11r, 12v, 43v, 124v, D/ACA 54, ff. 77v, 157v

¹⁸ Twelve Ingatestone residents made wills in the 1630s. Of these twelve people, five, Thomas Wolvett, John Finch, Robert Finch, Christopher Cornwall and William Stiffin, left money to Willis, ERO D/ABW 51/17, D/ABW 53/289, D/ABW 53/216, D/ABW 55/24, D/ABW 55/323. In each case in which Willis was left money he also witnessed the will, but he did not witness any of the other wills made in Ingatestone, ERO D/ABW 51/141, D/ABW 53/4, D/ABW 54/152, D/ABW 56/16, D/ABW 56/38, D/ABW 56/278, D/ABW 57/3

¹⁹ ERO D/AEA 39, ff. 6v, 100v, D/AEA 42, ff. 242v, 248v. Not all the trouble in Ingatestone can be attributed to Puritan nonconformists, for example the incidents detailed at D/AEA 39, ff. 6v, 45r, D/AEA 41, f. 242v, D/AEA 42, ff. 21v, 172r

receive the communion, and the unnamed churchwardens of November 1633, who were presented to the archdeaconry court ‘for suffering one Mr. Anger to preach in their church without showing his licence or subscribing his name to the church book’.²⁰ Mr. Anger was probably John Angier, the Essex preacher who had in large part learned his skill from John Rogers of Dedham. Angier was a noted and popular nonconformist. Furthermore, he had preached in several of the parishes near Coggeshall in 1633. It therefore seems likely that the churchwardens invited him to Coggeshall because they were both aware of and shared his beliefs.²¹ It seems unlikely that Mrs. Edmund Frost, John Davis and the churchwardens were the only Puritan nonconformists in Coggeshall but it is certainly difficult to pinpoint others. Robert Rayner, for instance, who was indicted in May 1634 for ‘prophane trampling upon the fonte in the tyme of divine service,’ may have been a Puritan nonconformist, expressing his disapproval of the sacrament of baptism as it was practised in the Church of England, but there is not sufficient evidence to dismiss the possibility that he was simply a troublemaker.²² Nor should the possibility that Rayner was a separatist be dismissed, for there was a community of Brownists living at Coggeshall a small number of whom featured regularly in the act books. The most prominent of the Brownists at Coggeshall were William Pennocke, Daniel Pennocke and Moses Ram.²³ The last of these three was accused of failing to send his daughter to catechism in September 1623 and made two attempts in 1638 to disrupt services at Coggeshall. On the first occasion he entered the church halfway through the service, on the second he insisted on remaining in the churchyard ‘throughout the common prayer’.²⁴ Moses Ram, along with William Pennocke and Daniel Pennocke, was also regularly presented to the courts for not receiving holy communion, for refusing to

²⁰ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 58v, D/ACA 49, f. 145r, D/ACA 51, f. 112r

²¹ Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 24, 201

²² ERO D/ACA 49, f. 216r

²³ ERO D/ACA 49, f. 66v, D/ACA 52, f. 226r. On the second occasion Robert Newton of Coggeshall was also presented the archdeaconry court as a Brownist.

²⁴ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 50v, D/ACA 53, ff. 75r, 117r

pay church rates and for absence from church.²⁵ Presumably because of the extent to which their views differed from those held by loyal members of the Church of England, the three were the most persistent offenders in Coggeshall, indeed in any of the parishes, either Laudian or Puritan, that have been examined.

They were not, however, alone amongst the Dodds' parishioners in committing more than one offence. John Cory was another repeat offender but unlike the Brownists he appears not to have acted from religious motives. In fact, he once explained in court that he had stayed away from church because as a poor man he needed to work and therefore to make money on Sundays.²⁶ Cory was not alone in choosing not to attend church for secular rather than religious reasons. Thomas Nicholls and Rawlins Taylor also chose to work rather than to attend divine service.²⁷ Others had rather less justifiable reasons for staying away from divine service and sermon. Henry Hazlewood, for example, preferred staying in bed to attending his parish church and on six different occasions a total of thirty one parishioners from Coggeshall were indicted for drinking alcohol rather than attending their local church.²⁸

The motivation behind other acts of disobedience is not explained in the act books and cannot be accurately inferred from the circumstances. The case of Thomas Reynolds, Thomas Myles and Richard Nositly, all of Coggeshall, who were presented to the archdeaconry court in April 1624 for 'putting on their hatts in the tyme of divine service', illustrates this point well.²⁹ For, whilst their choice of protest suggests that their reasons were religious, it is not clear to what exactly they were objecting. Bearing in mind the conformist stance of the Dodds, it is likely that they were Puritan nonconformists who were not prepared to tolerate the rituals and

²⁵ ERO D/ACA 43, ff. 87r, 114r, 119r, D/ACA 45, ff. 93r, 291v, D/ACA 46, ff. 95r, 127r, D/ACA 47, f. 108r, D/ACA 48, f. 29v-r, D/ACA 50, ff. 109v, 193r, D/ACA 52, f. 5r, D/ACA 53, f. 117r, D/ALV 1, f. 76v-r

²⁶ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 50v, D/ACA 45 f. 93r

²⁷ EROD/ACA 51, ff. 111r, 142v

²⁸ ERO D/ACA 48, f. 128v, D/ACA 49, ff. 39r, 40v, D/ACA 50, f. 109v, D/ACA 51, ff. 110v-r, 111r

²⁹ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 119r

ceremonies of the established church. Nonconformism is also the most realistic explanation in the case of the four men accused in September 1638 of ‘sitting ... with [their] hats on their heads irreverently in time of divine service usually upon Sundays’.³⁰ Similarly, it is probable that Robert Pennocke and Henry Frost indulged in ‘rude and p[ro]fane behaviour in laughing in time of divine service on the feast of the purification of St. Mary the Virgin’ because they were religious radicals who did not approve of the commemoration.³¹ Again that Maria Donwick and John Donwick ‘utterly refused to receive the communion’ for religious reasons cannot be confirmed but seems reasonable.³² About the objectives of other parishioners who caused disturbances or were involved in incidents at Coggeshall even less can be said. Presumably they would all have belonged to one or other of the groups outlined above but in what proportions it is not possible to be sure. Suffice to note that John and Nathaniel Dodd had to cope with fairly persistent opposition from a relatively large number of people with differing religious concerns.³³ This opposition would probably have been more than balanced by the support gained by the Dodds and wills from Coggeshall certainly demonstrate that the father and son team were not friendless. In 1620 Richard Blake left ‘to Mr. Dod, minister of this towne xl shillings to preach at my buriall’.³⁴ Four years later John Dodd was left forty shillings by Thomas Breidges on the condition that he preached the deceased’s funeral.³⁵ 1624 was also the year in which John Dodd witnessed the memorandum of John Spooner’s will.³⁶ Sarah Graye bequeathed John Dodd twenty shillings in 1625 and William

³⁰ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 57v

³¹ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 112r. The names of the two men are as suggestive as the occasion of the festival for members of the Frost and Pennocke families were religious radicals.

³² ERO D/ACA 50, f. 193r

³³ ERO D/ACA 43 ff. 45r, 87v-r, 90r, 92v, 114v-r, 139r, D/ACA 44, ff. 50v, 119r, D/ACA 45, ff. 52r, 93r, 94v, 114r, 167r, 202r, 203r, 234r, 290r, 291v, D/ACA 46, ff. 82r, 95r, 96v, 127r, 136v, 167v, D/ACA 47, ff. 48v, 94v, 95v, 108r, 152r, D/ACA 48, 11r, 12v, 25r, 29v-r, 129v, 182r, 228v, D/ACA 49, ff. 14v, 40v, 105v, 215r, D/ACA 50, ff. 86v, 109r, 136v, D/ACA 51, f. 138v, D/ACA 52, ff. 57r, 226r, D/ACA 53, ff. 22r, 23v, 37v, 78r, 79r, D/ACA 54, ff. 156r, 157v, D/ALV 1, ff. 76v-r, 79r, D/ALV 2, f. 32r

³⁴ ERO D/ACW 8/285

³⁵ ERO D/ACW 9/179

³⁶ ERO D/ACW 9/259

Buxton left the minister twice that amount a year later.³⁷ Till Ambrose of Coggeshall, who died in 1630, left to 'Mr. John Dodd minister of Coggeshall and Roger Benson messuages, lands, meadows, pastures, hereditants whatsoever ... set. lying and being in Great and Little Coggeshall.'³⁸ In 1634 William Raven bequeathed John Dodd twenty shillings.³⁹ Simon Richold left Dodd the same amount in 1635. Nicholas Richold and Thomas Shortland, who died in the same year as Simon Richold, left Dodd five pounds and three pounds respectively. The Richolds and Shortland also left money to Nathaniel Dodd.⁴⁰ John Dodd received twenty shillings from Thomas Guyon in 1636, forty shillings from William Digby in the same year and twenty shillings from William Graye in 1637. Nathaniel Dodd benefitted too from the wills of William Digby and William Graye, receiving twenty shillings from each man.⁴¹

The parishioners at Great Sampford and Hempsted, did not leave any money to Samuel Newton, their clergyman from 1634 to 1683, during the 1630s and early 1640s. Of course, it must be remembered that the silent majority in these two parishes raised no objections to Newton but he certainly faced opposition, not least from a miscellaneous group of people who were not interested in religion. This group included the quarrelsome and profane labourer John Frogg, who was accused at separate times both of refusing to pay church rates and of not attending church; Anne Mastall and Elizabeth Duff who made social calls during divine service; and the inappropriately named John Church, who once tried to blame his absence from church on sickness but was able to make no excuses for other absences or when he and several others were caught drinking in his house during service time one Sunday.⁴² William Mallory, Nicholas Silvester and Thomas Haster, three other men who

³⁷ ERO D/ACW 10/100, D/ACW 10/84

³⁸ ERO D/ACW 11/82

³⁹ ERO D/ACW 12/88

⁴⁰ FRC Prob 11/167/27, f. 215v, Prob 11/168/53, f. 65v, Prob 11/169/109, f. 136v

⁴¹ ERO D/ACW 12/88, D/ACW 12/173, D/ACW 12/201

⁴² ERO D/ABW 54/162, D/ACA 47, f. 62r, D/ACA 48, ff. 98v, 118r, D/ACA 49, ff. 222v, 238v, D/ACA 50 f. 125v. Frogg blamed his absence from church in December 1631 on sickness but in view of his record of non-attendance and generally disreputable behaviour it seems unlikely that he was being truthful. His wife was presented for absence from church on the same occasion and offered no excuse.

preferred a drink to attending divine service, were also disinterested in religion as opposed to men with conscientious objections to Puritanism.⁴³ Robert Westley, by contrast, seems to have been quite different. He chose to go to other parish churches rather than attend divine service in Great Sampford. The location of the churches favoured by Westley is not specified in the act books but the neighbouring parishes of Little Sampford and Loppins must be possibilities. That having been said, it is not possible to say why Westley would have been attracted to either of these parishes as their clergymen are obscure figures. Or perhaps Westley was travelling to Radwinter, which was then held by Richard Drake's predecessor John Mountford. The latter had no convictions for nonconformity but his widow was one of the nonconformists who was later to oppose Drake and it is possible that Mountford shared her inclinations. If Westley was in search of nonconformity he may also have journeyed to the distant Castle Hedingham which was presided over by the nonconformist Edmund Brewer.⁴⁴ Certainly it seems most likely that Westley was a nonconformist in search of a like minded minister. Nor was he the only nonconformist in Great Sampford. Thomas Mosse, who not only refused to recite set prayers in church but also 'work[ed] upon his trade being a carpenter upon Ascension day in tyme of divine service', seems to have had at very least nonconformist leanings.⁴⁵ As does the parish curate Matthew Wing, who declined to give the parishioners notice of holy days.⁴⁶ Robert Breene, Timothy Coalte and Nicholas Smith may have 'refus[ed] to pay a rate made for ornaments bought for the church and for bread and wine at Easter communion last' in May 1635 because they too were nonconformists.⁴⁷ As in Coggeshall though, the greater proportion of those in Great Sampford who were disruptive cannot be categorised nor can their motives be explained.⁴⁸ Those of the joiner John Turpin are,

⁴³ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 207v, D/ACA 51, ff. 219v, 259r, D/ALV 2, f. 71v

⁴⁴ ERO D/ALV 2, f. 251v

⁴⁵ ERO D/ACA 49, f. 60r, D/ACA 50, f. 154r. The former incident occurred before Newton's arrival in the parish and has been mentioned simply because it indicates that Mosse was a nonconformist.

⁴⁶ ERO D/ACA 49, f. 238v

⁴⁷ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 124r. The nature of the ornaments is not specified.

⁴⁸ ERO D/ACA 49, ff. 222v, 238v-r, D/ACA 50, ff. 70r, 125v, 154r, 106r, 107v, D/ACA 51, f. 219v, D/ACA 52, f. 242v, D/ALV 2, ff. 71v-r, 147r, 148v-r, 149v

for example, puzzling.⁴⁹ That individual was a churchwarden at Great Sampford in 1634, the year in which Samuel Newton took over the cure from the by then conformist Henry Greenwood.⁵⁰ Yet he does not seem to have been prepared to co-operate with Newton for in April 1635 he was ‘in the churchyard in service tyme upon Sunday and was so lowde there that he disturbed the minister when he was reading divine service so that he was forced to throw off the surplice and leave his reading and go out into the churchyard and fetch him in’.⁵¹

In Elsenham too there were those whose actions defy interpretation, for example, Thomas Perry, who absented himself from church in March and April 1637. Mr. Wybyrd, a non-communicant in 1634, the five parishioners who did not receive the communion in May 1635, Thomas Sandford, a regular absentee from church, and John Sampford, who refused to pay church rates in February 1634.⁵² In fact, it is only on one occasion apparent that the vicar of Elsenham, George Wilson, found himself in the midst of a conflict with religion at its heart. The incident around which the conflict centred occurred in 1638 and was described thus in the archdeaconry court records: ‘[George Wilson] received communion from Mr. Snell out of the rail and was about all the time of the administering of the sacrament’.⁵³ Unfortunately, the description omits important details. There is no mention, for instance, of the posture of those parishioners who received communion in the body of the church. It is probable, though, that they were kneeling for had any individuals been sitting or standing Wilson would surely have been additionally accused of giving communion to people who refused to kneel. Even if Wilson only gave communion to those who were kneeling his actions distance him from other moderate Puritans in Essex. The

⁴⁹ ERO D/ABW 60/261

⁵⁰ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 310v, D/ACA 49, f. 238r. In June 1627 John Turpin refused to pay towards ‘the repair of the bells, stocks, wheels and frames’. As a dislike of church bells is not a particular feature of nonconformity, it is feasible that he refused to contribute simply because he did not want to give financial aid to the Church of England.

⁵¹ ERO D/ACA 50, f. 126r

⁵² ERO D/ACA 47, f. 27v, D/ACA 48, ff. 159r, 176v, D/ACA 49, f. 223v-r, D/ACA 51, f. 259r, D/ACA 52, ff. 25r, 124r

⁵³ ERO D/ACA 53, f. 17r. Mr. Snell was presumably Wilson’s curate.

latter obeyed pre-Laudian ecclesiastical law and abided by Laud's injunctions; Wilson conformed to the former alone. In other words, Wilson's stance seems to have been unique, in Essex if not elsewhere. Consequently, it is of especial interest that there appears to have been very little conflict in Elsenham for it indicates that Wilson was, if not popular, at least widely tolerated. The notion of toleration has been introduced because popularity is always difficult to prove but if Wilson really was 'about *all* the time of the administering of the sacrament' his method of delivering holy communion at least was popular with the parishioners of Elsenham.⁵⁴ Those parishioners willing to kneel in the body of the church were certainly not nonconformists but they may have been moderate Puritans or Prayer Book Protestants. The churchwardens at Elsenham, who brought the activities in the parish to the attention of the church authorities, must, by contrast, have been Laudians for their grievance was that Wilson had not given communion from the altar rail.⁵⁵

From the quiet parish of Elsenham, we move to Terling, on which a fine monograph has been written by Keith Wrightson and David Levine. They have argued that support for nonconformity in Terling was both powerful and widespread and that resistance to Thomas Weld, vicar of Terling from 1625 to 1631 and his successor John Stalham came overwhelmingly from those who were both poor and without strong religious convictions.⁵⁶ They have found that the sectarians, who were to become so prominent in Terling during the Civil War and the Interregnum, were a feature of religious life in the village during the 1620s and 1630s.⁵⁷ The evidence collected by Wrightson and Levine is accurate, detailed and generally well interpreted. As they argue, Terling was a parish in which there was relatively little

⁵⁴ My italics.

⁵⁵ On the same occasion that the churchwardens presented Wilson for giving communion outside the rails they noted cryptically that an individual whose name is not longer legible 'hath read divine prayers in church and they no not what for'. This was possibly an attempt by the churchwardens to absolve themselves of responsibility for an illegal prayer reading in Elsenham church.

⁵⁶ John Stalham was not, by his own admission, a nonconformist when he first came to the parish though he was quickly persuaded by some of his new parishioners to abandon the prayer book ceremonies. J. Stalham, *Vindiciae Redemptionis*, (London, 1647), sig. A2

⁵⁷ Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, pp. 142, 156-163

conflict and such as there was did mainly involve the poorest in society, people such as the labourers Edward Melford and Thomas Baker.⁵⁸ It is also true that some of these labouring poor, for example the ‘ale house haunter’ Matthew Mitchell were apparently without interest in religion.⁵⁹ A proviso should be added here though, for it is not impossible that some of the poorer members of society who stayed away from church had a specific objection to Puritanism rather than a general lack of interest in religion. Furthermore, not all those who stayed away from church were from the lowest strata of society. Members of the prosperous, and otherwise respectable and law abiding, Burchard and Fincham families were also presented for non-attendance.⁶⁰ More intriguingly, the literate constable John Humphry, who was sufficiently pious to have once reported his fellow villagers Thomas Maye and Roger Stepkin for swearing ‘by God’, was himself on the wrong side of the law in February 1638, accused of absence from church and once coming to divine service after the second lesson had been read.⁶¹ The possibility that these protests were motivated by a dislike of Puritanism or, more positively, support for the traditional ceremonies and rituals of the Church of England, should not be dismissed.

Such feelings do not seem to have been, though, common in Terling.

Wrightson and Levine suggest that, on the contrary, there were enough committed, godly people in Terling to ensure that the village church was usually full.⁶² Church attendance, though, is a rather crude index of approval for to stay away from church was to break the law. Furthermore, the assertion that the church was well attended is impossible to prove; but that there were a number of zealous, godly people in Terling is irrefutable. Not least among this number were the churchwardens of 1629 who had

⁵⁸ *ibid*, pp. 137, 156, ERO D/ACA 44, f. 176r, D/ACA 49, f. 65r

⁵⁹ ERO D/ACA 47, f. 167v. More information about these individuals can be found at Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, pp. 26, 157. For examples of other parishioners who did not attend church or refused to receive communion see ERO D/ACA 43 f. 29v, D/ACA 44, f. 36r, D/ACA 45, f. 313r, D/ACA 46, f. 72r, D/ACA 48, ff. 148v, 167v, D/ACA 49, f. 65r, D/ACA 51, ff. 105r, 106v, D/ACA 52, f. 195r, D/ACA 53, f. 195r, D/ACA 54, f. 90v

⁶⁰ ERO D/ACA 45, ff. 129v, 267v. For further information about the social position of these families see Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, pp. 107-8

⁶¹ ERO D/ACA 52, f. 195r; Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, p. 143

⁶² Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, p. 143

allowed 'Mr. Peter a suspended minister to preach in their church without showing his license'. The churchwardens claimed to be without knowledge of the suspension or the fact that it was Mr. Peter's intention to preach in church, an emphatic but unconvincing denial of responsibility.⁶³

Those whom Mr. Peter would have attracted to the church remain anonymous but there can be little doubt that they made their presence felt within Terling. It would have been they who attended Thomas Weld's weekday lecture, they who supported the decision of the churchwardens of 1632 not to hold divine service on Easter day or other holy days, they who allowed the curate Nathaniel Bosse to baptise their children without using the sign of the cross and they who received the sacrament from Bosse and Stalham without kneeling before the communion table or at the altar rails.⁶⁴ When Stalham credited the 'best' of his parishioners with 'convinc[ing]' him of the righteousness of the Puritan path he was surely referring to those members of this group who sustained Puritan nonconformity in Terling throughout the 1620s and 1630s to the detriment of conformity and Laudianism.⁶⁵ No member of this group can now be positively identified but it may have included Robert Greene who upon his death in 1639 left his 'dere friend Mr. Stalham the summe of fourty shillings'.⁶⁶ But it must be remembered that there was also in Terling at least one supporter of conformity who was not prepared to tolerate the advance of Puritanism in Terling, he or she being, perhaps in conjunction with others, responsible for bringing the breaches of ecclesiastical law in Terling to the attention of the archdeacon. No individual is ever credited with this action, but the sheer volume of complaints relating to Terling is evidence that religious zeal was not confined to those who adopted extreme religious positions.

The events in Terling are better documented and more extensively commented upon than those in any other nonconformist parish in Essex during the same period.

⁶³ ERO D/ACA 46, f. 180r, D/ACA 47, f. 5r

⁶⁴ ERO D/ACA 47, f. 95v, D/ACA 48, ff. 14v, 148v, 167v, D/ACA 54, f. 152r

⁶⁵ Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, p. 160

⁶⁶ ERO D/ACW 13/184

However, enough evidence survives on other areas for comparisons to be made between the patterns of support and dissent that emerged in Terling and elsewhere. The adjoining parishes of Hempsted and Great Sampford are a good starting point for such a comparison. Their minister from 1601 to 1634 was Henry Greenwood. He was a nonconformist until close to the end of his life in 1634 and his brief period of conformity caused no noticeable repercussions in his parishes. Throughout his ministry Greenwood encountered opposition primarily from those for whom religion was only a minor concern. Amongst those who fall into this category are the troublemaker John Frogg and the ‘ale house haunter’ John Church, two individuals who also bothered Greenwood’s moderate Puritan successor Samuel Newton. Less notorious characters like William Steward and his wife, who claimed that they were too old to make the journey to church, and the apparently apathetic Nicholas Durrell who was ‘absent from church for two weeks though in his parish and in good health’ fall into the same group.⁶⁷

Only five individuals who appeared before the court for misdemeanours committed whilst Greenwood was minister were indicted for any offence whilst Newton was in charge. The first of these was John Turpin about whom more details are given below. The second was the Puritan nonconformist husbandman Thomas Mosse.⁶⁸ He got into trouble in May 1633, which was after Greenwood’s ‘conversion’ to conformity, for refusing to recite set prayers and in June 1635 for working on Ascension Day. As a nonconformist, Mosse was different from the final three indicted under both Greenwood and Newton, the known troublemaker John Frogg and John Church and Henry Stubbing, men who do not seem to have had any strong religious convictions.⁶⁹ The aforementioned three, like various members of the

⁶⁷ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 163r, D/ALV 2, f. 148v

⁶⁸ ERO D/ABW 54/163

⁶⁹ ERO D/ACA 45, ff. 97v, 310v, D/ACA 47, f. 62r, D/ACA 48, f. 98v, 99r, D/ACA 49, f. 60r, D/ACA 50, ff. 70r, 154r, D/ACA 52, f. 242v. Timothy Clover was presented to the courts once in May 1634 and once in 1635. It is possible that Greenwood was still the minister at the earlier date but as this is not certain, Clover has not been included in the list above. ERO D/ACA 49, f. 222v, D/ACA 50, f. 70r

Mostley, Stubbing, Silvester and Smith families appeared several times before the courts both before, after and during 1634.⁷⁰ Since two substantially different approaches to worship were used in the parish during this time, it is logical to suppose either that the members of these families objected to Puritanism in all its forms or that they had little patience with religion. In view of the moderate and conformist stance taken late in life by Greenwood and after him by Newton and the lack of evidence for any religious motivation, the latter seems the more likely explanation.

This is not, of course, to say that all but one of the parishioners from Great Sampford and Hempsted who found themselves before the church courts were indifferent to religion. John Turpin, who served as a churchwarden under Greenwood but was later indicted for disrupting one of Newton's services may also have been a nonconformist.⁷¹ Matthew Wing, the curate at Great Sampford in 1634 may have been a nonconformist too for he refused to give notice in church of holy days, as he was required by canon law to do.⁷² Greenwood's supporters are, however, for the most part anonymous. Such anonymity even applies to all but one of the churchwardens from the two villages who regularly found themselves in trouble with the church authorities. The churchwardens failed in 1625 to provide 'a fair cloth for the communion table' and continually refused to give notice of holy days or allow services to be held on these occasions. In addition, they were not prepared in 1632 to arrange for there to be singing in their churches on the anniversary of King's coronation day.⁷³ Only once, as part of an entry made in January 1625, do the records contain the name of the person responsible for advising the archdeacon of nonconformist activities in Great Sampford and Hempsted. The informant, who must have been a conformist, was Robert Harte of Hempsted.⁷⁴ It may have been he who

⁷⁰ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 62v, D/ACA 45, f. 310v, D/ACA 46, ff. 68v, 171r, D/ACA 47, f. 163r, D/ACA 48, f. 9r, D/ACA 49, f. 222v, D/ACA 50, f. 121v, 125r, 126r, D/ACA 51, f. 216v

⁷¹ ERO D/ACA 49, f. 238r, D/ACA 50, f. 126r

⁷² ERO D/ACA 49, f. 238v

⁷³ ERO D/ACA 44, ff. 122v, 179v, D/ACA 45, f. 5v, D/ACA 49, ff. 158v, 160v. The one churchwarden named is Thomas Ball of Hempsted, D/ALV 1, f. 67v

⁷⁴ ERO D/ACA 44, f. 179v

reported the churchwardens on other occasions too, or he may have been just one of those in the two parishes actively pursuing a return to conformity.

If there were zealous conformists at work in Mistley cum Manningtree no evidence of their existence survives; hostility towards Thomas Witham, rector of that parish from 1610 to 1643, seems to have come from a different quarter. The hostility referred to was slow to emerge and quick to cease being confined mainly to the year 1622.⁷⁵ Between January and June of 1622, after twelve very quiet years in Mistley cum Manningtree, a total of twenty eight people refused to pay for the bread and wine for the communion. Their motivation is at no point explained but the large scale nature of the protest would seem to be significant, as would the fact that no nonconformist ministers in Essex encountered such a refusal.⁷⁶ This does not of itself prove that a dislike of nonconformity was not at issue but had the objection of the twenty eight parishioners been to, for example, Witham failing to insist that parishioners knelt to receive the communion they would surely have pursued it through the courts. That the twenty eight were themselves nonconformists cannot therefore be ruled out. Witham, on the other hand, may not have been a nonconformist in 1622 for it was not until 1631 that he faced his first presentment for nonconformity.⁷⁷ If the twenty eight parishioners were nonconformists and Witham was at that time a conformist, it may be that the parishioners stopped paying for the bread and wine as a protest against kneeling at the communion. The problem with this theory is that it does not explain why the twenty eight parishioners only ceased contributing to the bread and wine in 1622 but perhaps by that time their patience with Witham had simply run out. If the objective of the non-payers was either to

⁷⁵ The archdeaconry court records contain a note of 4 separate incidents in the parish between 1610 and 1621. These 4 incidents involved 5 separate people. ERO D/ACA 39, f. 3v, D/ACA 36. ff. 125v, 183r

⁷⁶ ERO D/ACA 43, ff. 41r, 70r, 71v-r, 108r. It was far more common for parishioners of Laudian ministers to refuse to make a contribution to the cost of the bread and the wine. The court records suggest that there was only one other occasion between 1620 and 1640 on which parishioners of a Puritan minister refused to pay towards the bread and wine. That incident, which occurred in 1635, involved four parishioners from Great Sampford. It should be noted that the clergyman there at that time was the moderate Puritan Samuel Newton.

⁷⁷ ERO D/ACA 48 f. 202v

prevent Witham from giving communion or to persuade him not to insist that communicants knelt they were not granted immediate success. Indeed, in an odd move for either a conformist or a Puritan, Witham ‘administering the communion in beer for want of wine’ in June 1622. Perhaps because they were appalled at the communion having been administered in beer four of the twenty eight were still refusing to pay for the bread and wine in August 1622, by which time five new people had joined the chorus of refusal.⁷⁸ Whatever the reason for the disagreements over the bread and wine, they seem to have been resolved by the end of the summer of 1622, for after August that year there were no more cases of parishioners from Mistley cum Manningtree refusing to contribute towards the bread and wine. As importantly, none of the total of 33 parishioners indicted in 1622 for not providing money for the bread and wine were subsequently convicted of any offence.⁷⁹ Of those from Mistley cum Manningtree who did find themselves in trouble after 1622, religious impulse can be assigned with certainty to only one, the Brownist Robert Biles.⁸⁰ It seems unlikely that the ‘common rayler’ John Worsam refused to pay tithes on principle and to the others who did not pay rates or attend church no motive can be ascribed or indicated.⁸¹ Witham was not, of course, entirely without support. William Lynne of Mistley was godfather to Thomas Witham’s son John, a role he would not have been invited to undertake were he and the clergyman not close.⁸² In 1621 Thomas Lyes of Manningtree ‘g[a]ve unto Mr. Witham for a funerall sermon six shillings eight pence.’⁸³ Similarly in 1633 John Tarver of Mistley gave ‘unto Mr. Witham the sum of twenty shillings to preach a sermon at my funeral.’⁸⁴ Robert

⁷⁸ ERO D/ACA 43, ff. 108r, 125v-r

⁷⁹ At least two of the men, John Holmes and John Wright, had a prior conviction. They had been indicted in January 1622, along with twenty others, for refusing to contribute towards the repairs of the church. The refusal may have been prompted by their reluctance to give any financial assistance to the Church of England. ERO D/ACA 43, ff. 71r, 72v-r

⁸⁰ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 173r

⁸¹ ERO D/ACA 46, f. 108r, D/ACA 49, ff. 5v, 18r, D/ACA 50, f. 198r, D/ACA 53, f. 148v, D/ACA 54, f. 60r

⁸² ERO D/ABW 47/237

⁸³ ERO D/ABW 43/41

⁸⁴ FRC Prob 11/163 61, f. 25v

Beale of Manningtree left Witham exactly twice that amount four years later.⁸⁵ his bequest is especially interesting because he was one of those who had refused to pay for the bread and wine in 1622. Beale's posthumous support for Witham adds weight to the hypothesis that the controversy over the bread and wine was initiated by nonconformists who later reconciled Witham to what they considered to be the true path.

Robert Beale was, as will already be apparent, only one of the many lay people that lent active support to their nonconformist minister. Nor were such actions confined to those parishes previously mentioned. The nonconformist minister Thomas Peck, who was beneficed at Prittlewell from 1633 to 1662, also found kindred spirits in his congregation. One such was Ann Walden who left Peck twenty shillings to preach at her funeral.⁸⁶ Another was Henry Cullicke who, on his death in 1638, bequeathed to Peck 'in token of thankfulness for [his] prayers' a pair of gloves and five shillings. Peck also had the support of Samuel Barker and Abraham Dawson. They left Peck forty and ten shillings respectively upon their deaths in 1639.⁸⁷ A different kind of support was lent by Richard Wale, Anthony Reading and Sarah Boise, all of whom showed their solidarity with their minister's nonconformity by refusing to receive the communion kneeling.⁸⁸ However, because of insufficient evidence, most incidents in Prittlewell cannot be explained as acts of nonconformity. It will never be known why most of those from Prittlewell refused to receive communion or why a number of individuals refused to contribute towards the parish rates.⁸⁹ John Green, Edward Whittos and Samuel Baron, all of whom refused to pay for 'changes about the church' (probably a reference to the erection of the altar rails) in 1636, on the other hand, may have been Puritan nonconformists, although it is possible that they objected only to the Laudian innovations. That having been said,

⁸⁵ FRC Prob 11/173/20, f. 149v

⁸⁶ ERO D/APB W1/74

⁸⁷ ERO D/ABW 55/219. D/ABW 55/276

⁸⁸ ERO D/ALV 2, f. 18r

⁸⁹ ERO D/AEA 40, f. 128v, D/AEA 41, ff. 4r, 145r, 165r, 264r, D/AEA 42, f. 147r

incidents involving anti-Laudians were extremely rare in parishes led by a Puritan minister, whilst acts of nonconformity were common. The churchwardens at Langenhoe refused to walk the bounds of their parishes, as did their counterparts in Orsett.⁹⁰ At Rochford, John Chandler, Joseph Francis, Richard Wright, Nathaniel Hailes and Jeremy Harris would not 'go into the chauncel among the congregation to receave the sacrament ... but [made] the minister [John Fenner] goe about the church to where they sitt'.⁹¹ George Hubbard, William Grymes, Anthony Danes, Edward Chappell and William Massoon of High Laver also sat to receive the communion from their nonconformist minister Samuel Borphet.⁹²

Just as all nonconformist ministers had their supporters, so all had to cope with those who would not co-operate.⁹³ Troublemakers always formed a part of the latter group but how large a part remains a subject for discussion since no more can be discovered about most offenders than the scant details of their misdemeanour. That having been said, it is important to remember that it cannot be demonstrated that nonconformists only faced opposition from sectarians and troublemakers. The possibility remains therefore that some people caused trouble in the parishes of nonconformists because it was their belief that the Church of England needed no reformation, although opposition from this group may have been mitigated by certain factors. Most significantly, there is no evidence that Puritan nonconformist ministers refused to give the sacrament to those who insisted on kneeling, be it in the body of the church or, during the Laudian era, before the altar rails. Therefore those who wanted to take communion in that manner could be true to their conscience without coming into direct conflict with their clergymen. Nonconformist ministers could not prevent lay people obeying the canons by, for example, standing at the reading of the

⁹⁰ ERO D/ACA 51, f. 119v, D/ABA 8, f. 6v

⁹¹ ERO D/AEA 41, f. 183v-r

⁹² ERO D/AEA 38, ff. 6r, 45r

⁹³ For examples not already cited of disobedience see D/ACA 42, ff. 17r-18v, D/ACA 43, f. 71r, D/ACA 44, f. 65r, D/ACA 48, f. 13r, D/AEA 39, ff. 2r, 59v-r, D/AEA 40, f. 68v, 71v, 196v, 199r, 216r, D/AEA 41, ff. 2v, 55v, 56r, 136r, 220v, D/AEA 42, ff. 17r-18v, 158v, 196r, 230v, D/ALV 1, f. 89r, D/ALV 2, f. 206r, D/ABA 7, f. 160v, D/ABA 8, f. 6v, 24v, 227v, D/ABA 9, ff. 43r, 71v, 111r, 227r

creed and the commandments. In a sense all these would have been compromises, albeit unconscious ones, between nonconformist clergymen and their conformist parishioners, compromises which would have helped to prevent disputes. Furthermore, those who disliked nonconformism, unlike those who disliked Laudianism, could expect to have their grievances redressed by the authorities, so may have preferred to make official complaints than unofficial protests within their parishes. It is not known how many lay people provided evidence against nonconformist ministers during the 1620s and 1630s or how many rejoiced when, for example, the godly preacher Thomas Hooker lost his lectureship in Chelmsford.⁹⁴ In short, an apparent lack of public disagreements over religious issues does not imply that there were not considerable differences of opinion on these matters between nonconformist clergymen and some of their parishioners. It means simply that confrontation, and therefore antagonism, was avoided. This lack of antagonism may at least in part explain why no Puritan ministers in Essex were physically assaulted during the 1640s, although, of course, the support given to Puritan ministers and Puritanism by Parliament would also have deterred potential attackers.

Most lay Puritans could provide only small scale support but a few in Essex were sufficiently wealthy and powerful to provide more extensive aid. The most prominent member of this group was Robert Rich, second earl of Warwick. The earl, who had been educated in the Puritan environment of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, funded, sheltered and befriended a large number of Puritan clergymen. Stephen Marshall, Hugh Peter and William Twisse are just three of Warwick's friends and Thomas Hooker and Jeremiah Burroughs but two of those who enjoyed his protection.⁹⁵ Naturally, Warwick was also inclined to place Puritan ministers in the livings under his control. It was he who presented John Argor, John Beadle, Samuel Collins, John Dodd, Daniel Duckfield, Henry Greenwood, William Munning.

⁹⁴ For a full description of the events surrounding Hooker's deprivation see Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 155-166

⁹⁵ Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 161; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 189; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 174; *DNB*, sub Rich, Robert

Thomas Peck and Obadiah Sedgewick to their parishes in Essex.⁹⁶ A number of other Puritan clergymen were grateful to the earl for services rendered. William Gouge dedicated part of his 1631 publication *God's Three Arrows: Plague, Famine and Sword*, to the earl and countess of Warwick in recognition of their patronage. Gouge also dedicated *The Saint's Sacrifice*, published a year later, to the earl. Two of Richard Sibbes' 1638 publications, *Light From Heaven* and *Two Sermons*, were dedicated to Warwick by their editor. The latter's choice of dedicatee was appropriate since Sibbes had received protection and support from his friend the earl. *The Breast Plate of Faith and Love*, the posthumous work of John Preston was again presented to the author's patron by its editor. Another who gave thanks to Warwick was the widow of John Stoughton; she included a dedication to the earl in her husband's *The Christian's Prayer*.⁹⁷ However, by far the most effusive tribute to the earl of Warwick was paid by Edmund Calamy in the funeral sermon he delivered at his patron's interment in 1658. Calamy described Warwick as 'zealous', 'devout', 'merciful', 'humble in carriage' and endowed with 'nobility, humility, piety and charity'. The earl was in Calamy's opinion 'not only a great man' but also 'a godly and religious man' for 'he had the substance and power of [religion] in his heart'. Warwick was in addition praised by Calamy for 'his conscientious observation of the Lord's Day' and 'by his example and encouragement drawing many persons of quality to our congregations', for his 'extraordinary care and diligence in preparing himself for receiving the sacrament' and above all for the method in which he disposed of his church livings: 'being always careful to prefer able, godly and painful ministers'. Calamy concluded that: 'we have this day lost one of the greatest friends that godly and painful ministers had in England'.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Newcourt, *Repertorium*, pp. 39, 89, 146, 160, 234, 384, 388, 474, 497

⁹⁷ Williams, *Index of Dedications*, (London, 1962), p. 197; *STC*, pp. 267, 464, 524, 542; Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, p. 161; *DNB*, sub Rich, Robert

⁹⁸ E. Calamy, *A Pattern for All, Especially Noble and Honourable Persons to Teach them how to Die Nobly and Honourably*, (London, 1658), pp. 32-37

In 1641 the earl of Warwick had himself been mourning a loss, that of his friend and confidant Lady Joan Barrington of Hatfield Broad Oak in Essex.⁹⁹ Lady Joan and her husband Sir Francis, who lived only until 1628, were fervent Puritans and did much to sustain, aid and befriend ministers of the same cast of mind.¹⁰⁰ The couple numbered among their friends Archbishop Ussher, a Calvinist who was tolerant of nonconformity. The Archbishop sometimes delivered sermons at Hatfield Broad Oak as did his chaplain, Nicholas Bernard.¹⁰¹ John Preston too preached for his friends at Hatfield Broad Oak.¹⁰² Another who enjoyed a strong relationship with the Barringtons was Robert Yarrow, the Puritan author of *Sovreign Comforts for a Troubled Conscience*, which was dedicated to Sir Francis by its editor. Jeremiah Dyke recognised that he equally was fortunate to have made the acquaintance of the Barringtons and therefore dedicated his tract *Good Conscience* to the baronet. The Puritan divines John Wing and Samuel Hieron had also received assistance from Sir Francis Barrington and both dedicated works to him by way of thanks.¹⁰³

Sir Francis Barrington did not have the right to present to any livings in Essex but that did not stop him employing Puritans at Hatfield Broad Oak. He created a lectureship within the town of Hatfield to which he appointed first John Huckle and then James Harrison. Little is known about Huckle for he published nothing and never came into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities. His successor was more notorious not least because in 1636 he apparently delivered a lengthy sermon in preference to reciting set prayers.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the lectureship, Barrington employed a chaplain for his household. This position was held for a while by the

⁹⁹ For evidence of the relationship between Warwick and Lady Joan Barrington see BL Egerton MS 2645, f. 303

¹⁰⁰ A. Searle, (ed), *Barrington Family Letters 1628-1632*, Camden Fourth Series, Volume 28, (Royal Historical Society, London, 1983), p. vii

¹⁰¹ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 49, 53, 56, 230; *Barrington Letters*, p. 12

¹⁰² Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 9

¹⁰³ Williams, p. 13; *STC*, pp. 165, 298, 601, 607; *DNB*, sub Heiron, Samuel; *Barrington Letters*, p. 12. The books were S. Hieron, *The Christmas Journal: Three Sermons*, (London, 1607) and J. Wing, *The Saint's Advantage*, (London, 1624). Part of T. Barnes *Needful helps: Against Desperate Perplexity*, (London, 1622) was dedicated to Sir Francis and Lady Joan Barrington.

¹⁰⁴ *Barrington Letters*, p. 13

nonconformist Ezekiel Rogers. When Rogers left Hatfield Broad Oak it was to become minister at the living of Rowley in Yorkshire, which was in the gift of Sir Francis.¹⁰⁵ Despite the great distance between Yorkshire and Essex, Rogers did not lose contact with his erstwhile employers at Hatfield Broad Oak. On the contrary his letters were not only regular but also affectionate in tone.¹⁰⁶

In one of his letters to Lady Joan, Rogers describes her late husband as her 'head and helper'.¹⁰⁷ The description is accurate, for although not an equal one, the marriage was a partnership. Lady Joan was no less committed to the cause of Puritanism than her husband, as she amply demonstrated after his death. Richard Blackerby, Jeremiah Dyke, James Harrison, Arthur Hildersham, Thomas Hooker, Stephen Marshall and Nathaniel Ward all received financial support from Lady Joan Barrington.¹⁰⁸ George Wilson, the Vicar of Elsenham, a parish close to Hatfield Broad Oak, acknowledged her 'undeserved kindnesses and large favours'.¹⁰⁹ In dedicating a work to Lady Joan, Daniel Rogers also paid her tribute.¹¹⁰

Sir Francis and Lady Joan Barrington were survived by their eldest son, Sir Thomas Barrington. His patronage was less extensive than that of his parents but he was unquestionably one of the godly. Sir Thomas's main interest was in supporting the projects of the Puritan educationalist Samuel Hartlib. One of Hartlib's aims was to use preaching, publications and political manoeuvrings to reconcile all Protestants. The second baronet provided funds for this grand scheme, as did his fellow Essex lay Puritans Katherine Barnardiston, Edward Bendlowes and Sir Nathaniel Rich.¹¹¹ Sir

¹⁰⁵ This was one of two livings held by Sir Francis Barrington in Yorkshire. To the other, Walkington, he presented the Puritan William Chantrell. *Barrington Letters*, p. 13

¹⁰⁶ See for example, BL Egerton MS 2645, ff. 142v-r-143v, 224v, 281v

¹⁰⁷ BL Egerton MS 2645, f. 142v

¹⁰⁸ ERO D DBa A15, *passim*

¹⁰⁹ BL Egerton MS 2645, f. 43v

¹¹⁰ Williams, p. 13; *STC*, pp. 286, 489. The books dedicated to Lady Joan Barrington were A. Harsnett *A cordial for the Afflicted*, (London, 1631) and D. Rogers, *A Treatise of the Two Sacraments of the Gospel*, (London, 1633)

¹¹¹ Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 255-267; *Barrington Letters*, pp. 254-255; *DNB*, sub Bendlowes, Edward. In her will Katherine Barnardiston left £200 to be spent, at the discretion of Stephen Marshall and her executors, on religious and charitable work. £150 of this was given by Marhsall to Hartlib (Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 160-161). A further £10 was left to Marshall by Barnardiston along with a request that he perform her 'funeral or sermon'. FRC Prob 11, 163, f. 206v

Thomas's brother in law, Sir William Masham of Oates in Essex, did not give to this particular project but he was nevertheless dedicated to the Puritan cause. Indeed, Sir William's zeal was such that by 1636 Laud requested that the man who had once employed the radical nonconformist Roger Williams as his chaplain be examined as 'a very factious Puritan'. Laud's vicar-general Nathaniel Brent claimed that he did not have time to investigate Masham. He did, however, examine the case of the Harlackendens at Earls Colne. The Harlackendens are best remembered now as the patrons of the Puritan diarist Ralph Josselin, vicar of Earls Colne from 1641 to 1683 but they were by no means late converts to Puritanism. In the 1630s the Harlackendens' social circle included Puritan allies such as the clergymen Thomas Shepherd and Samuel Rogers and, furthermore, it was, Brent heard, they who persuaded John Hawkesby, vicar of Earls Colne, of the merits of nonconformism.¹¹² A second individual who was recruited to the ranks of the Puritans during the 1630s was William Kempe of Spains Hall, patron of the living of Finchingfield. When Kempe appointed Stephen Marshall to the living of Finchingfield in 1636 he had not been to church for seven years but thanks to Marshall's persuasion he became a regular and godly churchgoer.¹¹³

William Kempe was joined in his support of Puritanism by several members of the famous Essex family, the Mildmays. Foremost among the Mildmay Puritans was Sir Henry Mildmay of Danbury Place, brother of the Laudian Sir Humphrey Mildmay. Sir Henry graduated in 1612 from Emmanuel, Cambridge, the college which had been founded by his grandfather Sir Walter Mildmay twenty eight years earlier. A decade and a half after his graduation, Sir Henry promised to give six benefices to his *alma mater* in order to convince Charles I not to overturn the statute that required all fellows to leave within a year of gaining their doctorates. The statute was intended to ensure a regular flow of preachers from the college, so it can be deduced from Sir Henry's wish to preserve it that he was strongly in favour of

¹¹² Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 152, 239-240

¹¹³ Webster, *Stephen Marshall and Finchingfield*, p. 3

preaching. That having been said, there is no evidence that Sir Henry ever fulfilled his promise but, since his words alone persuaded the King to permit the continuance of former policy at the college, he may have considered the final action unnecessary. There is certainly no evidence that his commitment to Puritanism had diminished. Indeed, he was one of the members of the 1628 parliament to explicitly condemn Arminianism. More significantly, when it was within his power to do so, he ensured the appointment of fellow godly men such as John Maidstone, Henry Barrington and Abraham Barrington to positions of influence within Essex.¹¹⁴ Sir Henry Mildmay's cousin and namesake at Graces, Little Baddow, shared his kinsman's religious inclinations. He demonstrated this by leaving £3 to the Puritan minister John Newton in 1639.¹¹⁵ Elizabeth, Sir Henry's daughter may not have been a Puritan herself, but she married a member of the godly, Robert Mildmay of Terling. It was he who ensured a Puritan incumbent at Terling by presenting first Thomas Weld and then John Stalham to the living. Joanna, another of the Terling Mildmay's was probably also a Puritan, for the godly minister Thomas Barnes dedicated a sermon in his collection *Needful Helps: Against Desperate Perplexity*, to her.¹¹⁶

The above is not, and is not intended to be, an exhaustive list of all the Puritan patrons in Essex; it will never be possible to identify all those who favoured radical Protestantism. Nor is it intended to imply that Puritans were inevitably from the middle and higher strata of society. The information is provided as a reminder that Puritanism was sustained in the pre-Civil War period as much by the determination, support and commitment of lay people as by the ministry of Puritan clergymen. Of course, much of this positive input did come from the more prosperous members of society but it should not be assumed that Puritanism was sustained by them alone.

¹¹⁴ *DNB sub* Mildmay; Sir Henry. B. Manning, 'The Aristocracy and the Downfall of Charles I' in B. Manning, (ed), *Politics, Religion and the English Civil War*, (London, 1973), pp. 76, 269; P. Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, Volume II, (London, 1768); p. 29. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 133; D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge: Politics in the Puritan Revolution*, (London, 1985), pp. 93, 100, 138-9, 302, 325

¹¹⁵ FRC Prob 11, 181, f. 308r

¹¹⁶ Morant, Volume II, p. 25; *Barrington Letters*, p. 12; Wrightson and Levine, *Terling*, pp. 137-139

Similarly, it should not be thought that opposition to Puritanism came mainly from those in the lower strata of society. John Stalham of Terling, for example, encountered opposition from the constable John Humphrey and from members of the Burchard and Fincham families, whilst George Wilson of Elsenham, Samuel Borphet of High Laver, John Fenner of Rochford and Joseph Holdsworth of Ramsden Crays all found their churchwardens ranged against them.¹¹⁷ Even if opposition did come from the lower sections of society it cannot always be ascribed to the irreligious. They were a significant element but against the examples of troublemakers such as John Frogg of Great Sampford, Matthew Mitchell of Terling and John Worsam of Mistley cum Manningtree must be set the cases of the Coggeshall Brownists Moses Ram, William Pennocke and Daniel Pennocke.¹¹⁸ The social status of several of the others who opposed Puritanism cannot be identified, for the members of this group, the Prayer Book Protestants, are for the most part anonymous. Occasionally their existence can only be confirmed only through their actions. Thus, it is only because reports were given to the church authorities of nonconformist activities in Terling that it is apparent that there was at least one Prayer Book Protestant in that town. As it is not clear whether one person or several in Terling kept the authorities abreast of the situation there, so it is not known if the Prayer Book Protestant Robert Harte was alone in informing the archdeacon of Colchester about nonconformism in Hempsted and Great Sampford.

The conclusion that must be drawn from the evidence presented above is that there is no single explanation behind the disputes which arose in the 1620s and 1630s between Puritan ministers and their parishioners. However, one interesting trend can be pinpointed. It is apparent that although all clergymen had their detractors, moderate Puritan clergymen met with a more hostile response than their nonconformist colleagues. The greater degree of hostility is of particular significance

¹¹⁷ ERO D/ACA 45, f. 129v, D/ACA 52, f. 195r, D/ACA 53, f. 171r

¹¹⁸ William Pennocke and Daniel Pennocke were weavers, Moses Ram was a fuller. ERO Q/SR 268/26

because much of it seems to have been generated by lay nonconformists who did not feel that their clergyman was sufficiently radical. In fact, moderate Puritan ministers seem to have provoked a reaction similar to that incited by Laudian clergymen. Not that people were unable to distinguish between the two; they could and clearly they favoured moderate Puritans, for no attempts were made to eject them from their livings. In the same way, it should not be thought that the disagreements between Puritans in the 1620s and 1630s precisely foreshadowed the rifts that splintered radical Protestantism over the following 20 years. In the pre-Civil War period most disputes focused on the way in which reform would be best achieved: it was not until reform began that Puritans really started to discuss their many different visions of the church. Nevertheless, it is significant both that the pre-Civil War Puritan movement was not entirely homogeneous and that lay Puritans did not necessarily unreservedly support Puritan clergymen. Ironically, conformist or Laudian lay people were probably more prepared to co-operate with a moderate Puritan clergymen than their nonconformist peers for lay reactions to Puritanism were affected as much by the practice of the minister as by his theological and liturgical beliefs.

LIST OF PURITAN CLERGYMEN AND THEIR PATRONS¹¹⁹

Clergyman	Living	Patron
John Argor	Leigh on Sea	Robert, earl of Warwick
	Layer-de-la-Hay	Patron unknown
John Beadle	Little Leighs	William Kemp
	Barnston	Robert, earl of Warwick
Nathaniel Bosse	Terling	Robert Mildmay
Edmund Brewer	Castle Hedingham	Patron unknown
Joseph Broday	Great Bentley	Bishop of London
Samuel Borphet	High Laver	Thomas Walshingham
Caesar Calendrine	Stapleford Abbotts	Charles, Prince of Wales
Nathaniel Carr	Langenhoe	William Warren
John Carver	Burnham	Charles Grove
Josiah Church	Pagglesham	Bishop of London
Samuel Collins	Braintree	Robert, earl of Warwick
John Dodd	Coggeshall	Robert, earl of Warwick
Nathaniel Dodd	Coggeshall	Robert, earl of Warwick
Daniel Duckfield	Childerditch	Robert, earl of Warwick
John Edes	Lawford	Edward Walgrave
John Fenner	Rochford	Robert, earl of Warwick
Henry Greenwood	Hatfield Peverell	Patron unknown
	Great Samford	Richard Bancroft,
		Bishop of London
	Hempsted	Richard Bancroft,
		Bishop of London
John Hawkesby	Earl's Colne	Earl of Oxford
Joseph Holdsworth	Ramsden Crays	William Walton
Simon Lynch	North Weald	Bishop of London
Edward Jeffrey	Southminster	Patron unknown
Stephen Marshall	Finchingfield	William Kemp
Robert Mercer	St. Peter's, Colchester	Thomas Raishleigh
John Morse	Romford	Patron unknown
Samuel Newton	Great Sampford	Bishop of London
	Hempsted	Bishop of London
Thomas Peck	Prittlewell	Robert, earl of Warwick
Obadiah Sedgewick	Coggeshall	Robert, earl of Warwick
John Stalham	Terling	Robert Mildmay
Mathias Stiles	Orsett	Charles I
Nathaniel Ward	Stondon Massey	William Hollingworth
Thomas Weld	Terling	Robert Mildmay
James Willet	Little Chishall	William Ayloff
John Willis	Ingatestone	William Smith
George Wilson	Elsenham	John Creaver
Thomas Witham	Mistley cum Manningtree	Charles I

¹¹⁹ The source for this table is Newcourt's *Repertorium*

Samuel Wharton

Felsted

Robert,
earl of Warwick

CONCLUSION

Laudianism appears from the surviving evidence to have been more widespread than Puritanism amongst the beneficed clergy in Essex during the 1630s, the former boasting forty one and the latter thirty six ministers in the county. The thirty six Puritan ministers served in thirty six parishes but as a result of pluralism and movement between livings, fifty parishes in Essex had a Laudian minister at some point prior to the English Civil War. Obviously the picture is different if we take into account unbeneficed lecturers of whom perhaps forty were Puritan and hardly any Laudian, yet the number of Laudian ministers in Essex is surprising for the historiography has tended to portray the county as one in which Puritans and Puritan values faced little serious challenge.¹ Yet in at least thirteen per cent of the 387 parishes in Essex a different style of worship and a different set of beliefs were championed. And those promoting Laudian ceremonies and ideas were not simply cynically obeying the current authorities. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that the overwhelming majority were deeply committed to the altar rails, the ‘beauty of holiness’, reverence and adoration and worship centred on the Eucharist. John Browning and Alexander Read defended Laudian practices and beliefs in print.² Richard Drake made clear in his autobiography his lifelong devotion to Laudianism, the Prayer Book ceremonies and episcopacy.³ And as far as can be discovered from the surviving sources no Laudian clergyman in Essex contested the accuracy of the evidence brought against him. Laudianism was, then, a significant force among the clergy of Essex in the 1630s.

So was Puritanism, although it must be remembered that the Puritan movement consisted of two main parts. For, as a comparison of Henry Greenwood’s

¹ O. Kalu ‘Continuity and Change: Bishops of London and Religious Dissent in Early Stuart England’, *Journal of British Studies*, 18, (1978), p. 40 Kalu argues that between 1623 and 1629, forty one of the forty four lecturers serving in the county of Essex were Puritans. Of the other three, he describes two as of ‘uncertain views’ and terms one a ‘non-Puritan’.

² Browning, *Concerning Publike Prayer*, *passim*; Read, *A Sermon Preached*, *passim*,

³ Bodleian Library Rawlinson MS D158

beliefs before and after his ‘conversion’ to conformity demonstrates, nonconformist Puritans had a very different approach to the ceremonies of the Church of England from their moderate counterparts. During his nonconformist phase Greenwood was an opponent of the surplice, refused to observe holy days and had at very least ‘doubts’ about the use of the sign of the cross in baptism and kneeling at communion.⁴ But, very late in life, he came to accept that these were ‘things indifferent’ and that it was possible to obey the ecclesiastical law on these issues without disobeying God’s law as set down in the Bible.⁵ Greenwood does not, however, seem to have abandoned his Puritan piety or his evangelical zeal. In other words, he seems to have made the transition from nonconformity to moderation but remained a Puritan. Indeed, his life is a reminder that the Puritan movement was held together by a common core of beliefs, not by the universal agreement of all its members on every issue.

In writing his final tract, Greenwood stated that it was his aim to achieve ‘peace’ within the Church of England.⁶ Of course, no such peace ensued and perhaps it would have been impossible to achieve for so many people felt very strongly about their beliefs. Even Nehemiah Rogers, who championed first Calvinism and then Arminianism in his published works and began his career as a moderate Puritan but became a defender of the Church of England seems to have undergone genuine changes of heart each time. If he had adopted his various views merely for the sake of convenience it is unlikely that he would have promoted them in print. Anyway, if turning his sails to the prevailing wind was Rogers’ prime consideration he would not have been a Puritan in the 1620s, or an Arminian in the 1650s. Lay people too made independent religious and spiritual choices, as opposed to accepting unquestioningly the teaching of their parish clergyman. Nor were these men and women necessarily

⁴ Greenwood, *Marks*, p. 14; ERO D/ACA 44, f. 122v, D/ACA 45, f. 5v, D/ACA 48, ff. 158v, 160v

⁵ Greenwood, *Marks*, p.4

⁶ *ibid*, sig. A4

Puritans; lay Prayer Book Protestants and lay Laudians adhered with the same determination to their chosen stance.

Of course, it is easy to forget or ignore those lay people who were deeply attached to Laudianism, for in the surviving records it is Puritan nonconformists who come to the fore time and again: it was Puritan nonconformists who challenged the religious authority and teaching of Laudian clergymen and found themselves before the archdeaconry courts for their pains; it was Puritan nonconformists who gadded to other parishes to hear ‘godly’ sermons; it was Puritan nonconformists who encouraged their ministers to flout the ceremonies of the established church. However, it must be remembered that these activities were known about only because they were contrary to ecclesiastical law; they do not constitute evidence that Puritans were especially pious. Laudians did not have to break ecclesiastical law to demonstrate loyalty to their creed and precisely because they could be faithful to their beliefs and to the laws of the Church of England, evidence for their fervency was rarely recorded. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the individuals named here as giving support to Laudian ministers or unambiguously demonstrating their belief in, for example, the beauty of holiness and the importance of the altar rails may have possessed a faith as passionate as that of any Puritan. Similarly, evidence of Prayer Book Protestants in the county of Essex shows that they too were pious people with an unswerving commitment to their faith. For if they had simply been conformists they would not have become involved in disagreements with Laudian ministers. The findings of this thesis therefore bear out Judith Maltby’s conclusion that Prayer Book Protestants were ‘zealous’ promoters of their religious code.⁷

But was Prayer Book Protestantism any more than a minority concern? Or was there, as Christopher Haigh has argued, a ‘popular demand for ceremony in services’?⁸ The question is almost impossible to answer but Haigh does not present

⁷ Maltby, ‘Parishioners and the Prayer Book’ in Fincham (ed) *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 137

⁸ C. Haigh, ‘The Taming of the Reformation: Preachers, Pastors and Parishioners in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England’, *History*, 85, (2000), p. 584

sufficient evidence to justify his claim that the Prayer Book Protestants were a numerous or powerful group. Indeed he can find only five cases in the whole of England in which parishioners petitioned for 'conformist pastors'.⁹ In any case, the Prayer Book Protestants whose names or deeds are recorded in the Essex records are small in their numbers. Of course, it is highly unlikely that these few individuals comprise the movement in its entirety. It is probable that there were Prayer Book Protestants across Essex, who because they did not bring complaints against, or find themselves in conflict with, a Puritan or Laudian minister, can never be identified. In the same vein, Laudianism was without doubt more prevalent in Essex than the surviving evidence suggests. It may even have been as popular amongst the laity as it was amongst the beneficed clergy. In short, it may have claimed thirteen and a half per cent of the laity but the historical records give no hint of the numbers who demonstrated their genuine support for Laudianism simply by reverently worshipping in the Laudian style. One thing, however, that does emerge from the surviving evidence is that Laudianism was not as unpopular as some historians have argued. There is no evidence for John Morrill's assertion that most lay people found Laudianism 'profoundly offensive'.¹⁰ That a vociferous minority in Essex were of these opinions is the most that can be deduced from the evidence and it would certainly be wrong to assume that this minority was in some way representative of public opinion more generally. It must be remembered that most lay people have left no evidence of their religious beliefs. This is not to say that they were necessarily neutral but they are certainly uncategorizable. Following from this the point should be made that Puritanism was in all likelihood less popular than historians such as Hunt have implied.¹¹ Again, the sources reveal no more than that there was a relatively small, determined group of Puritans in Essex. Importantly though, many of this group were men and women with little or no influence beyond, or even within,

⁹ *ibid*, p. 575

¹⁰ Morrill 'Religious Context', p. 163

¹¹ Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, *passim*

their parish boundaries. Laudianism too drew its supporters from more than one social group. There is no way of telling, even approximately, what numbers of lay people were Laudians or Puritans. Of course, the sources furnish far more evidence of lay support for Puritanism than of lay support for Laudianism but, for the reasons given above, the picture they paint must be treated as partial. That having been said, the events of the early 1640s indicate that Puritanism was more popular in Essex than Laudianism.

On the question of the relative unpopularity of Laudianism and Puritanism, by contrast, conclusions can be more easily drawn because the church court records provide as much information about the reception accorded to Laudian ministers as they do about the reaction to Puritan clergymen. Interestingly, the evidence reveals that Laudianism and moderate Puritanism were almost equally unpopular and that opposition to both was led by Puritan nonconformists. But why would nonconformists treat their fellow Puritans with the same contempt with which they treated Laudians? In all probability, moderate Puritans met with a reaction as hostile as that accorded to Laudians because they too enforced the Prayer Book ceremonies. Nevertheless, it is surprising that lay Puritan nonconformists did not differentiate in their treatment between those enforcing the ceremonies because they felt bound to obey the laws and injunctions of the established church and those doing so because they believed in them wholeheartedly. In any case, it might be thought that nonconformist Puritans would inevitably have less patience with Laudians than with moderate Puritans for the former did not provide 'painful' preaching and conducted acts of worship in which reverence, adoration, the 'beauty of holiness', the importance of set prayer and the significance of the Eucharist were stressed. For the reasons just given, the similar treatment meted out by nonconformist Puritans to their moderate counterparts and to Laudians cannot be explained away by the fact that it was impossible to distinguish between the two groups. Indeed, the proof that nonconformists could tell the difference is that in the 1640s it was the Laudians and not the moderate Puritans against whom depositions were made by members of the

laity. This suggests too that in the 1640s nonconformists were prepared to overlook or perhaps forgive the moderation with which they had previously been impatient in the 1630s. This impatience perhaps stemmed from their feeling that moderate Puritan ministers were hypocrites, preaching one thing and practising another.

Whatever the precise feelings of lay nonconformists towards moderate Puritan clergymen, it is certain that they were enthusiastic about ministers who shared their religious views, for nonconformist clergymen could count on the support and allegiance of like minded people. Furthermore, the opposition that nonconformist clergymen encountered from Prayer Book Protestants and Laudians was considerably less than that which Laudian and moderate Puritan ministers faced from nonconformist lay people. In general then, nonconformist ministers met with a markedly less hostile reaction from their parishioners than either Laudian or moderate Puritan clergymen. The most likely reason for this was that there were smaller numbers of Laudians and Prayer Book Protestants among the laity than there were Puritan nonconformists. Consequently there were fewer individuals to provide opposition to Puritan nonconformity than there were to provide opposition to Laudianism.

These findings are of wider interest because they are in accordance with those made by Tyacke about the significance of religion in the years immediately preceding the English Civil War. They demonstrate that ordinary parishioners, like the academics, bishops, clergymen and well educated and influential lay people Tyacke has studied, often found it impossible to live in harmony with those of differing religious beliefs. In other words, the findings of this thesis reinforce the claim that religion was a cause of disputes and disagreements in the 1620s and 1630s and are a reminder that although the complex theological issues debated at the Hampton Court Conference, the Synod of Dort, the York House Conference, in the Houses of Parliament and at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were not a major topic of discussion in local parishes, ordinary people were often deeply concerned with the related questions of ceremony and ritual. Moreover, it has been shown here that at

local, just as at national level, religion, far from being controversial only for a short time, was an almost constant source of conflict and tension. As has already been said, it must be stressed that it was not solely Laudianism that provoked a negative response from parishioners. However, the fact that lay nonconformists provided a far more consistent and vigorous form of opposition to the Prayer Book ceremonies and the Laudian innovations than lay Prayer Book Protestants or lay Laudians provided to Puritanism, demonstrates that Laudianism and not Puritanism was the prime cause of discontent amongst the laity in Essex. This ties in with Tyacke's conclusion that one of the circumstances that provoked the Civil War was the extreme hostility of Puritans to the rise of Arminianism and its related ceremonial innovations. So, although further research is needed to determine whether the reactions to Laudianism and Puritanism in Essex are a microcosm of the situation across England or a unique response, the result of this investigation is to appreciate more fully one of the most important causes of the English Civil War.

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